



The Lark Bunting

JANUARY 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 1



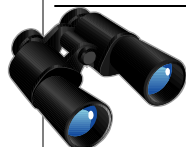
Photo by John Drummond

January 24, 2011

Nick Komar - Gulls of Colorado

Colorado is a mecca for bird diversity within the USA, but few people think of gulls with respect to this diversity. Yet Colorado's Front Range has become one of the premier gull observation sites in the interior United States; this was recently demonstrated by the famous visit of the Ross's Gull to Denver's Cherry Creek Reservoir. This is partly due to human population growth – we provide plenty of irresistible offal in our landfills, as well as numerous venues for gull revelry, drinking, and fine dining among our myriad man-made reservoirs. It is also due to the very source of Colorado's avian diversity itself – the location of Colorado at a continental crossroads, the intersection of the Western mountains and the Eastern plains. In addition to several species of gulls that commonly populate the interior of the continent, Colorado is occasionally visited by maritime stragglers from all directions of the compass – north, south, east, and west. To the delight of birders at least twenty-one species of gulls have graced Colorado's lakes and landfills, and more species are certain to show up in the future. A small group of birders suffers an odd predilection for studying gulls and that group is always on the lookout for Colorado's next gull species. These people call themselves larophiles (the gull's

Continued on page 3



January Field Trips

Saturday, January 1

Denver Urban Christmas Count

Coordinator: Hugh Kingery. Get off to a flying start on your 2011 list! Information in December Lark Bunting and on dfobirders.org. Contact leaders for meeting time and places. \$5.00 to National Audubon Society.

Sunday, January 2

Walden Ponds

Join the Boulder Bird Club for their regularly scheduled "First Sunday Bird Walk" from 9 am 'til noon. From Denver, go west on US 36 to Foothills Parkway Exit (C157) then north to Arapahoe Avenue- east to 75th St, then north on 75th past Valmonth Road and the railroad track. Turn left at Wildlife Habitat sign. Follow road to Cottonwood Marsh parking lot. Always surprises! Coordinator: Lonny Frye 303-931-9131.

Saturday, January 8

Longmont Area

Leader: Chris Owens, 303 772-6048. Meet at 0830 at Jim Hamm Nature center. From I25 take Exit 240. Go west 4 miles on CO 119 to Boulder -Weld CO Line Road, then 2 miles north to park on left at E 17th Ave. Bring lunch as trip will end about 1 or 2 pm depending on weather and birds. State parks Pass may be needed.

Sunday, January 9

Wheatridge Greenbelt

Leader: Toni Rautus, 303-422-7322. Meet at 0900 at Prospect Lake north parking lot. To reach lake, go south off 44th Avenue in Wheatridge between Quail and Robb Streets, West of Kipling. ½ day trip. Wintering woodland species and hopefully, a good variety of waterfowl. Lunch optional – maybe we'll head for a local restaurant.

Saturday, January 15

88th and the Platte River

Leader: Buzz Schaumburg, 303-699-1721. Meet at 0900 at parking lot at 88th and the Platte for ½ day trip. Lots of ducks on the open water, hopefully Barrow's Goldeneye and Long-tailed Duck. Scopes would be helpful. There are picnic tables, but lunch will be optional.

Continued on next page

Sunday, January 16

No trip planned

Thursday, January 20

Pueblo – Weekday Trip

Leader: Bob Shade 303 975-2476. Must register with leader for this full-day outing. Meeting place to be decided but it'll be an early start at 0630. Dress for changes in weather and, of course, bring lunch, water and snacks. Always a chance for rarities in this "southern" region.

Saturday, January 22

Belmar Historic Park

Leader: Karleen Schofield, 303-936-8661. Meet at 0900 at 800 S. Wadsworth. Turn west on Ohio Avenue from Wadsworth, straight ahead for 2 blocks into Irongate parking area next to the lake. ½ day trip, easy walking. Karleen really knows the area and its wildlife.

Sunday, January 23

Cherry Creek State Park

Leader: Mary Keithler, 303 771-1421. Meet at 0830 at the marina for ½ day trip, lunch is optional. Bring scopes for "far-out" waterbirds and treetop hawks scanning for prey. Parks Pass required.

Saturday, January 29

South Platte Park – Carson Nature Center

Leader: Ed Holub 303-979-2194. Meet at 0800 at Nature Center parking lot, (north of Mineral Avenue, 1 block west of Santa Fe Drive, behind Aspen Grove shopping center.) Raptors and waterfowl plus winter visitors and permanent residents at the Center's feeders.

Sunday January 30

Birds of Prey Driving Tour

Leader: Kathanne Lynch 303-968-4750. 10:00am – 1:00pm Auto carpool loop tour from Lagerman Reservoir near Longmont. Register with Leader before Thursday, January 27. Limited to 20 participants or 5 cars.

Join us for a driving tour focusing on raptors. We will be led in the field by Sue Cass, coordinator of Boulder County Nature Association's (BCNA) Winter Raptor Survey. Emphasis will be on field identification. Habitat, ecology and breeding strategies will also be discussed. Historical and count data for the Survey is on www.bcna.org in Publications and Research. Please bring lunch, drinking water, and binoculars. Also bring a bird field guide, spotting scope, and a two-way radio if you have one. No fee. Optional donation to BCNA is welcomed. Trip is weather-dependent. Physically accessible.

Saturday, January 8

An invitation from the Boulder Birding Club:

Boulder Bird Club invites DFO to come birding with Ted Floyd. Noon 'til dark. Meet at the Valmont Power Plant parking lot. Take Arapahoe Road to 63rd St - North to entrance on east side of the road. There are stone pillars marking the entrance.

Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, and compiled by Cris Cook.

Thank you for donations to Educational Endowment Fund

Michael Kiessig, Carol & Dan Cook, Danny & Denise Smith, Dan Brooke & Cheryl Teuton, Kathanne Lynch, Dave Hill, Chuck Hundertmark & Marjorie Jannotta, Barney & Pat Poole, Ted & Nancy Pinkert, Judy Lane, Bill & Suzanne Wuerthele, Rick Creswell, Peggy Wait

Welcome New Members!

Paula Barnak, 1575 Fillmore St #12, Denver, CO 80206, 303.388.2792

Angela Grun, 3085 South Pearl St, Englewood, CO 80113, 303.762.0684

Flavia Hoefler & Joe Molen, 1845 S Franklin St, Denver, CO 80210, 303.777.0628

Barbara Schmidt, 7763 E Bayaud Ave, Denver, CO 80230, 303.332.3816

The Membership Form can be found on the inside back cover.

avian family is Laridae), or gull-lovers. Nick Komar is one such larophile. At the January DFO meeting, Nick will present “Gulls of Colorado”, a photographic overview of Colorado’s gulls, with insights on where they come from, how to identify them, and which ones to look for next.

Nick has been an active member of Northern Colorado’s birding community since he came to Fort Collins from Massachusetts in 1997. It was at that point that he began his career as a biologist for the U.S. Public Health Service (working on West Nile Virus and many other topics), an occupation which allowed him to continue his lifelong study of birds. Missing the familiar coast of New England, Nick was drawn to the “seagulls” that abound in Colorado. Nick now considers himself a “larophile” – a lover of gulls – and frequently finds himself perched on some frigid lakeshore with one eye glued to a telescope studying gulls flying into a distant communal roost on a cold winter evening. During one interview when asked about the spectacle of Bald Eagles Nick responded, “Eagles are dull. Gulls are much more interesting.” Nick published an article and photographs in *Colorado Birds* documenting Ring-billed Gulls feasting in midair on Russian Olive fruits. Nick led the CFO field trip to view Colorado’s first state record of a Kelp Gull in 2003, and has led numerous gull workshops for Fort Collins Audubon Society.

Join DFO for an interesting and informative evening discussing this sometimes intimidating group of feathered creatures -- you yourself may come away from this presentation as DFO’s newest larophile!

Upcoming Programs

February 28, 2011—Paul Bannick -- Owls and Woodpeckers of the West: A Visual Feast—As in his recent book, Paul will take DFO members on a visual and auditory exploration of habitats of the West through the owls and woodpeckers that most define and enrich them.

March 28, 2011—An unusual DFO meeting offer: A DMNS Behind the Scenes Museum Tour

Meeting Location

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15 p.m.; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30.** If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. January Meeting Presentation*

What's in a Name...?

My new favorite bird, having just made a very rare appearance in Colorado, is named after a Rear Admiral with the Royal Navy, no less. This world traveler was born in 1802 and joined the navy at 12 years old. There’s an island named after this gentleman and an Ice Shelf. He was part of several important expeditions to the Arctic along with travels to the Antarctic between 1839-1843. Rear Admiral Sir James Clark Ross is the gull’s namesake. On an Antarctic voyage, close to the Magnetic South Pole, he broke through a wide expanse of pack ice and into a large and clear sea that later bore his name. Mr. MacGillivray named the small but beautiful, pink hued belly gull after Sir James in 1824. (John Drummond writes more about this bird on page 6.)

There’s another beautiful white bird, larger than the above mentioned gull, also named for a Ross. From 1827-1874, Bernard R. Ross was an Irish trader and administrator, employed as a chief factor/administrator in the Hudson Bay Co. Marriage to his boss’s daughter helped him to obtain the position but he was apparently an able administrator. Our old friend and ornithologist, John Cassin named the goose for Mr. Ross in appreciation for transportation arrangements of another collector’s specimens to the Smithsonian Institute. Ross himself was an associate of the Smithsonian.

I hope everyone got to visit the gull while he was here at Cherry Creek SP. And don’t forget to scan through snow geese flocks for that occasional bird named after Bernard Ross.

Good birding to all—Niña

Field Trip Summaries for November 2010

Nov 6, Saturday *South Platte (SOU)*

Leader(s): Doris Cruze. **Observers:** Dan Brachear, Cheryl Chessick, Rick Creswell, Rena Fowler, Allen Hagood, Rich and Betsy Maslow, Nancy Osborn, Sharon Pfeifer, Barbara Shissler, Polleke Siraa, Paul and Phoebe Thayer, Dennis Wojcicki. **Time:** 0800-1100. **Distance:** 1.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood forest, willows, open fields, lake. **Weather:** Sunny, 47-59°F, southwest wind 0-15mph. **Totals:** 26 species, 356 individuals.

Highlights: Watching a Magpie harass a perched Kestrel; Western Grebes on Cooley Lake.

Nov 7, Sunday *Longmont Area (LON)*

Leader(s): Chris Owens. **Observers:** 16. **Time:** 0800-1245. **Distance:** 4 miles by car. **Habitat:** Pond, reservoir, lake. **Totals:** 35 species, 2550 individuals.

Nov 13, Saturday *Cherry Creek State Park*

Leader(s): Bob Brown. **Observers:** Mark Amershek, Nathaniel Berry, Pauline Ide, Mary Keithler, Lois Levinson, Sharon Pfeifer, Andy Spellman, Oliver Spellman, Tanner Spellman. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 10 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Open water, mixed riparian, elevation 5575'. **Weather:** Mostly clear, 32°F, west wind 5mph. **Totals:** 37 species, 466 individuals.

Nov 18, Thursday *Boulder Area (BOU)*

Leader(s): Charles Thornton-Kolbe. **Observers:** Christie Owens, Mark Amershek, Mary Ann Rose and others from Longmont area. **Time:** 0800. **Habitat:** Private feeder, reservoir, ponds, lakes. **Weather:** Nice, 30-50°F. **Totals:** 52 species, 1334 individuals.

Nov 20, Saturday *Southwest Metro Lakes (SOU)* Trip cancelled.

Nov 21, Sunday *Chatfield State Park (CHA)*

Leader(s): Dick Schottler. **Observers:** Mark Amershek, Ruth Ann Erwin, Ben Moore, Bruce Neuman, Mark Wallace. **Time:** 0730-1345. **Distance:** 15 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lakes, river riparian, prairie elevation 5500'. **Weather:** Clear, 40-50°F, variable wind 0-45mph. **Totals:** 46 species, 1286 individuals.

Highlights: Trip was plagued by very high winds all morning, subsiding after noon until almost calm but by then most observers had called it quits. Winds made birding difficult.

Nov 28, Sunday *Pueblo (PUE)*

Leader(s): Ira and Tammy Sanders. **Observers:** Derek and Peggy Hankins, Tina Jones, Bruce Neuman, Dick Prickett, Joe Roller, Tim Smart, Peggy Wait. **Time:** 0630-1430. **Distance:** 240 miles by car. **Habitat:** Open reservoir, city park, arid residential. **Weather:** 4-38°F, wind 4-38mph. **Totals:** 51 species, 2050 individuals.

High/Lowlights: Golden Eagle at short distance, Long-tailed Duck; horrible wind all day.

Tuesday Birders

November 2, 2010 *Stonehouse Park, Bear Creek Greenbelt*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 47 (three groups). **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 5.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willow, with meadows, elevation 5300'. **Weather:** Sunny, 43-63°F, west wind, 0-6 mph. **Totals:** 33 species, 437 individuals.

Nov 9 *Crown Hill Regional Park (CRO)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 50 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Urban park, riparian, lake, fields, elevation 5550'. **Weather:** Sunny to cloudy, 47-53°F, east-northeast wind, 0-10 mph. **Totals:** 20 species, 458 individuals.

Continued on page 7

Demeter's Memoir

Back in 2009 a column written by Mike Foster devoted to birds and environmental issues appeared in this newsletter. Demeter is still carrying her torch, hoping to shed light on murky issues and to spotlight a few special places where birds gather.

She has combined a few of her familiar topics with a number of new essays into a book, *The Ties That Bind: Birds, Nature and Us*, published in October 2010. Demeter draws you into a highly personal memoir focused on open-hearted encounters with Nature. She reminds us how intimately humans are connected to Nature, how our spirituality grows from that connection, how our well-being depends upon it. At the heart of the book are several new essays revealing the magic connection of people and place, especially encounters with the birds and creatures of South Table Mountain, just above Golden, in all seasons.

The book is partly a primer on ecology and partly a critique of our consumer economy. You will find expanded versions of her thoughts on nature consumers and nature lovers, plus fresh revelations on the dark side of corporate capitalism. Her interviews with such luminaries as Thomas Jefferson, John F. Kennedy, Walt Whitman, Wendell Berry, Edward O. Wilson, and Albert Einstein are included.

As before, Demeter has transmitted her insights through her faithful scribe, known to you as Mike Foster. Her underlying message is inspiring: if an ordinary someone can become less selfish and more connected, so can a lot of us. She offers many practical suggestions on how all of us, especially birders, can get involved.

To learn more about the author, and to read excerpts from the book, go to [www.authorhouse.com:80/type mike f. foster](http://www.authorhouse.com:80/type/mike%20foster) in the box at top of screen, then click search; at the next screen click on The Ties That Bind. Ask your local bookstore to order it, or go to amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com.

Book signings by author before Christmas

The Ties That Bind: Birds, Nature and Us—by Mike F. Foster

Please note: the picture of South Table Mountain on the cover is by local photographer Bill Eden

Saturday, December 4, noon to 2 p.m.

Wild Bird Center, 1685 S. Colorado Blvd. (in the Safeway shopping center, at the northwest corner of Colorado Boulevard and Mexico)

Saturday, December 11, 8:30 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

An event sponsored by Front Range Birding Company (Tom and Diane Bush, owners). Meet at 8:30 at Panera Bread Company, Aspen Grove shopping center (South Santa Fe and Mineral Avenue). Park either near Panera Bread, or at the Carson Nature Center. Bird walk at South Platte Park, followed by lunch and signing back at Panera Bread, c. 11:15 to 12:15. All welcome at Panera's for lunch and signing, but call Front Range Birding at 303-979-2473 to sign up for the bird walk (limited space available)

Hearthfire Books, 1 - 3 p.m. (same day: Dec. 11)

In Bergen Park, five miles north of Evergreen on Highway 74
Bergen Village Shopping Center (across from Le Peep)

Tuesday, December 14, 6 - 9 p.m.

Clear Creek Books, 12th Street & Washington Avenue, Golden

DFO President's Update

New Trip Schedulers Recruiting Again: Patty Echelmeyer has resigned after over 30 years of service to DFO as a scheduler. We will need two others to step into this role. With two more volunteers, each person would need to spend four to six hours every six months to recruit trip leaders. This job could take four to eight emails and four to eight calls to recruit eight to 10 trip leaders each month. This is a big help to our organization and helps support our over 70-year tradition of offering 100 field trips per year. Please contact me, Charles Thornton-Kolbe, at 303.777.7588 to volunteer.

Paying 2011 Dues: Please pay your DFO dues for 2011, supporting our organization which offers over 100 field trips annually and offers eight excellent birding lectures each year. Mary Cay Burger will be at next DFO meeting to collect your dues on January 24. Also, just drop the dues in the mail. Membership form on the last page. A portion is tax deductible.

Lesson from the Ross's Gull:

- Patience in bird identification resulted in this bird being identified. Group birding is often helpful and what an effort to pluck this bird out.
- Also, much thanks goes to co-birds and RBA for spreading the word about this bird. Thanks to Joyce Takamine and others for making the RBA continue to be a daily update in Colorado. Also, thanks to those who got on the phone and got the word out quickly. These are all volunteer efforts which keep the birding community well-connected.
- Special thanks to Joe Roller for joining the RBA team and for finding this bird.
- There was something like the 17th record for this species in the lower 48 states. Check out the range of this bird in Alaska to fully realize how lucky we are.

Thank you to the full birding community, and let us keep working together.

Ross's Gull Visits Cherry Creek

On the morning of November 19, DFO member Joe Roller searching for a previously reported Snow Bunting at Cherry Creek SP, found a small gull with dark underwings which initially he thought was a Little Gull. Then Glen Walbeck and Cole Wild got to see the bird and the wedge tail, faint rosy breast, pointed wing tips and medium gray underwings indicated that this was a mega mega rarity, a Ross's Gull in adult non-breeding plumage. The finding was immediately broadcast and over the next week hundreds of birders from far and wide came to see their once in a lifetime "lifer". At times allowing very close views it spent much of its time gleaning along a sand bar near the northwest corner or flying near the dam wall dip feeding like the accompanying Bonaparte's Gulls.



Photo by John Drummond

First discovered in 1832 near Melville Island by the British Arctic explorer, James Clark Ross searching for the North West passage, it was not seen again for 50 years and then only occasionally on Arctic explorations.

It breeds in the high Arctic of northernmost North America, and northeast Siberia, migrating short distances south in autumn, with most of the population wintering in northern latitudes at the edge of the pack ice. The majority of the population breeds in Siberia and winters in the Sea of Okhotsk. It breeds in high Arctic marshy tundra and deltas with willows often in association with Arctic Terns or Sabine's Gulls for protection from predators. During the summer the Ross's Gull eats primarily insects and in winter small fish and algae.

Because of its remote summering and wintering locations there are no good estimates of the total world population but up to 3000 have been counted passing Barrow in Alaska during the fall migration. In the lower 48 States it was unknown until 1975 when one appeared in Newburyport, Massachusetts but sightings now occur nearly every year. An estimated 10,000 birders went to see this exotic and rare bird in Newburyport. Not a bad number but this pales into significance to the estimated 50,000 British twitchers who descended onto a seaside resort in Devon a couple of years ago to tick a Long-billed Murrelet. There have been around 30 sightings since Newburyport and our Gull (strange, many observers called it a she, how did they know??) will represent the third confirmed record for Colorado.

It was my third lifetime sighting having seen it previously in Scotland and Delaware, but this time I had plenty of time to study the unique characteristics of one of the most wanted species in North America.

John Drummond

So Sayeth the Speaker...

Kevin Cook, wildlife biologist, has been a scientific nomenclature zealot since he learned to spell “brontosaurus” in elementary school. He is deeply disturbed by the seemingly haphazard naming of wildlife species, and how those species are ordered, and incensed by common names which do not faithfully describe nature’s creatures. He points out with passion that these names, cute as they might be, are misleading and distract us from a more accurate understanding of the essence of the bird or animal. One example he gave was of New World Vultures and Condors, how similar they are in morphology and function. Both have small hind toes, nails and not talons, perforate nostrils, nonfunctional syrinxes (a syrinx is an organ which parallels the function of the human larynx), and heat regulation by unconventional means (pooping evaporative liquid onto their toes). Mr. Cook would prefer we called Turkey Vultures Red-headed Condors.

A reason, but not an excuse if you were present to witness Mr. Cook’s splendid passion, is the complexity of settling on standards by which to classify birds. Should we clump together birds with similar anatomy, behavior, biochemistry, genetics, phylogenetics or simply by virtue of whether or not certain birds can interbreed? Not an easy puzzle. To illustrate, he pointed out that flamingos and grebes have many genetic characteristics in common, but obviously they don’t look or act alike. The same is true for albatrosses and penguins. Nightjars are more closely related to swifts than to owls, and falcons and parrots are genetically more similar than anyone might have predicted.

Mr. Cook warns that there are rough waters ahead in the battle to revise an inaccurate, but familiar nomenclature. However, he will brook no sloth. He recommends leaving behind the Latin scientific names in favor of an alpha-numeric code system, but even more urgently he pleads for a revision of common names so that the words used may someday be more descriptive.

Carol Blackard

November Field Trips, continued

Nov 16 *Anderson Park (AND)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 37 (two groups). **Time:** 0930-1230. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, cottonwood, willows, wetlands, ponds, elevation 5344’. **Weather:** Sunny to cloudy, 41-58°F, southeast winds, 5-10 mph, later with gusts from west 25-40 mph. **Totals:** 29 species, 506 individuals.

Nov 23 *Red Rocks Park (RED)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 24 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1200. **Distance:** 1 mile on foot. **Habitat:** Foothills, shrubland, elevation 6360’. **Weather:** Clear, calm, 30-49°F, southwest wind, 0-8 mph. **Totals:** 28 species, 100 individuals.

Nov 30 *Cherry Creek State Park (CHE)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 27. **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 11 miles by car, 0.3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lake, riparian/cottonwood, wetlands, grasslands, elevation 5550’. **Weather:** Partly cloudy, 28-43°F, wind west 6-16 mph. **Totals:** 34 species, 1573 individuals.

	Species	Date	Number	Location	County	Observers & comments
55	Sandhill Crane	Nov 15	20	Lakewood	Jefferson	ASGD caller
55	Sandhill Crane	Nov 26	36	Franktown - Deerfield	Douglas	Karen Metz
55	Sandhill Crane	Nov 26	unk	Franktown - Bannockburn	Douglas	Christine Arthun
121	Am 3-Ted Woodpecker	Nov 22	2	Sedalia	Douglas	Kirk Huffstater
		Nov. 19-				
199	Eastern Towhee	Dec. 3	1	Russellville	Douglas	Urling & Hugh Kingery

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Charles Thornton-Kolbe, 2284 S Josephine Street, Denver CO 80210, 303.777.7588
Charles@pibird.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Lynn Willcockson, 2698 S Niagara, Denver CO 80224 303.757.7000
lynnliz2698@aol.com

TREASURER

Bob Shade, 9353 W Nevada Place, Lakewood CO 80226-3029, 303.975.2476
WRSHADE3@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Niña Routh (10) nrouth@copper.net

DIRECTORS

Alison Kondler (13) fieldbirder@msn.com
 Rick and Connie Steinkamp (12) ricconcal@comcast.net
 John Drummond (12) jxdrummo@aol.com
 Carol Blackard (11) carol-blackard@comcast.net
 Ira Sanders (11) greatauk@msn.com
 Chris Blakeslee (10) chrisabla@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Patty Echelmeyer, 303.233.4947,
 Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct
 Jackie King, 303.287.1644,
 Feb, May, Aug, Nov
 Meredith Anderson, 303.280.8576
 Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec
 Support Field Trip Coordinators: Mary Geder
 303.986.6127, Alison Kondler 303.904.9140 and
 Jill Boice.303.863.7580

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, 303.646.3829
veronicaholt@Q.com

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome and openly solicited. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80232, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dacbcCook@comcast.net

Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421, email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is back-up contact person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email d_d_hill@comcast.net.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists](#) Web Site.

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

January 24

**Nick Komar
“Gulls of Colorado -- Everything
You Always Wanted to Know (But
Were Afraid to Ask!)”**



Photo by John Drummond of the notorious Ross's Gull.



The Lark Bunting

FEBRUARY 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 2



Paul Bannick Photo

Paul Bannick - Owls and Woodpeckers of the West: A Visual Feast — February 28, 2011

DFO is delighted to host nationally known nature and bird photographer Paul Bannick at the February meeting. Paul hails from the Pacific Northwest and is author and photographer of the best selling bird book, *The Owl and The Woodpecker: Encounters with North America's Most Iconic Birds*. He will take DFO members on a visual and auditory exploration of habitats of the West through the

owls and woodpeckers that most define and enrich these places. This riveting presentation celebrates the ways the lives of these two iconic groups of birds are intertwined with one another and with their habitats. The presentation will include dozens of photos taken in the last 12 months.

Paul has appeared on dozens of NPR stations and programs including *Travels with Rick Steves*, and *Bird-Note*. National Public Radio's blog on Paul's owl photography is among their most popular to date, and they recommend *The Owl and The Woodpecker* as one of the top five photography books of 2009. His work has appeared in *Audubon*, *Sunset*, *Pacific Northwest*, *PhotoMedia*, the *Seattle Times*, the *National Wildlife Federation Guide to North American Birds*, *Smithsonian's Guide to North American Birds*, and in many other books, magazines, parks, refuges, and other outlets in North America and Europe. Paul has served as keynote speaker for dozens of festivals and fundraisers across the country, and two of his photos are part of the traveling exhibit, "Arctic Wings," featuring images from several of the world's finest wildlife photographers.

After graduating from the University of Washington, Paul worked successfully

Continued on page 3



February Field Trips (and a bonus for January!)

Saturday, January 29th

Join the Cherry Creek Stewardship Partners—Hawk Walk

This group organizes activities to assist with the restoration of Cottonwood Creek within Cherry Creek State park. Working with the engineers who designed the stream project, they assess health and function, schedule service projects and collect census information. Come join the prairie dogs, ducks and the raptors who love them. Contact Casey Davenhill at 303-744-0613 for more information. Meet at 9:00 at the Cherry Creek High School Parking lot, corner closest to the West entrance of Cherry Creek State Park.

Sunday, February 6th

Northeastern Colorado Raptors

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748.

Meet leader at 6:30 at the Colorado Division of Wildlife Parking lot, 6060 N. Broadway. Exit I-25 at 58th Street, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north to parking lot on the right. All day trip, bring layers of clothes and lunch.

Continued on next page

February Field Trips, continued

We are hoping to schedule Thursday themes about once a month. If weather is bad enough that the Denver Public Schools cancel, the walk probably will not go. Please call to check. To volunteer, make suggestions or protests, feel free to call Charles Thornton Kolbe or e-mail Jill: jill@booksandcats.net

Thursday, February 10

South Valley Park

Initiation of "Thursday theme walks" Not so much a "guided walk" as a roundtable. Meet at 9:30. Try to call coordinator Jill Boice at 303-863-7580 if you are interested (but not required). Will bird until about 2:00. Bring lunch. South Valley is a small park but offers a variety of habitats. Let's consider the winter feeding strategies of birds we see. To get to South Valley, take C-470 to Ken Caryl Avenue, exit westbound. Go a short distance and turn left onto South Valley Road and proceed to the park's north parking area.

Saturday, February 12

Cherry Creek State park

Leader: Mary Cay Burger 303-771-3431

Meet at **EAST GATE pay station of the Park at 8:00.** Entrance off of South Parker Road. If reservoir is still frozen we will have good opportunities to study Eagles. Also, should see many winter waterfowl. Probably ½ to ¾ day trip. Bring lunch. Need a State Parks Pass and Cherry Creek sticker or plan to ride with someone who does.

Sunday, February 13,

South Platte River, Overland Pond Park

Leader, Casey Davenhill- 303-744-0613

Valentine's event. This weekend is the benchmark for South Platte Waterfowl. Should see interesting behaviors along this stretch of the S. Platte that is the pride of the Overland Park and Ruby Hill neighborhoods. Meet at 8:00 at Overland Pond parking lot on Florida Avenue just east of the S. Platte River in Denver. Will go from Overland to Grant Frontier Park. Half day trip The Overland Golf Course Club House is a great place to have lunch for those interested.

Thursday, February 17

Canon City

Leader: Charles Thornton-Kolbe 720-320-1974

Meet ten minutes before 6.00 am at the Park 'n Ride off of I-25 at Yale Ave. (from I-25 take the Yale Exit and turn right at Yale, then an immediate right turn into the parking lot). We will form carpools at the Park N Ride in the parking lot area farthest from Yale Avenue. **Please get there by 5:50 AM.** This is a DFO trip with no RSVP, but we will leave on time (6 am). In year's past, we have found some very cool birds including Golden-crowned Sparrow, Harris' Sparrow, Ladder-backed Woodpecker (often), all three blue birds (sometimes), and Juniper Titmouse (often). Rufus-crowned Sparrow is possible along with a lot more. We may even sneak in Lewis' Woodpecker at Louviers, but I have to be back to Denver at 5 pm. Bring: Layers of clothing and coats (including rain gear), binoculars, scope (if you have one), lunch, snack, beverages. Bring breakfast if you have not eaten before leaving. Also two way radio and cell phones can be helpful to support car-to-car communication. Bring about \$25.00 for your gas share. If bad weather, come to parking lot, and we will go for it or find an alternative plans.

Saturday, February 26

South Platte North from 88th

Leader, Paul Slingsby 303-422-3728

Walk the South Platte River north from 88th Avenue. There will be many ducks on the river and ponds. Also, we will pass some cottonwood areas. We'll also check some locations south of this trailhead. This will be a slightly long ½ day trip with some easy walking on open space trails. Scopes are optional. Be prepared for cold weather and possibly wind. Bring snacks and perhaps a hot drink. You are invited to join the group afterwards for an optional lunch at a warm establishment. This trip will meet at 8:00A.M. at the Open Space trailhead at 88th Avenue just west of the South Platte River. 88th Avenue is exit number 10 from I-76. Please call Paul Slingsby, 303-422-3728, if you plan to join this trip.

Sunday, February 27

Bear Creek Drainage

Leader: Mike Henwood 303-716-8551 home 720-840-5070 cell

Meet at 8:00 A.M. at Red Rocks Trading Post. Then will go to Bear Creek Lake Park and work our way upstream. Should See Great Horned Owls on nest as well as American Dippers among the variety of wintering and resident foothills birds. May go as far as Lair-o-the-Bear. Probably will go until 1 or 2 P.M. so bring layers of clothes and lunch.

Meeting Presentations, continued

for 15 years in the computer software industry beginning as one of the original 75 employees of the Aldus Corporation. He later served as a Director for Adobe Systems, and also worked as a senior manager at Microsoft. Wishing to combine his passion for wilderness conservation with his career, Paul turned his attention to non-profit work and currently serves as the Director of Development for Conservation Northwest, an organization dedicated to protecting and connecting wild areas from the Pacific Coast to the Canadian Rockies.

Today Paul is also a wildlife photographer specializing in the natural history of North America with a focus on birds and habitat. Coupling his love of the outdoors with his skill as a photographer he creates images that foster the intimacy between viewer and subject, inspiring education and conservation. Recently Paul has collaborated with Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture at the University of Washington in Seattle to launch a new national traveling exhibit of conservation photography based on his book *The Owl and the Woodpecker*. To see hundreds of amazing photos and learn more about Paul and his book go to <http://www.paulbannick.com>. Don't miss his fledgling Northern Pygmy-owl photographed in the foothills in Jefferson County, Colorado or his diving Northern Hawk Owl. Hopefully Paul will have some of his books to sell and autograph at February's meeting.

Owls and Woodpeckers...this is a program NOT to be missed!

Up-Coming Programs

March 28, 2011: An unusual DFO Meeting offer: A DMNS Behind the Scenes Museum Tour

April 25, 2011: We are hoping to have the new ABA President

Later this month...January 24, 2011

Nick Komar - Gulls of Colorado

Colorado is a Mecca for bird diversity within the USA, but few people think of gulls with respect to this diversity. Yet Colorado's Front Range has become one of the premier gull observation sites in the interior United States; this was recently demonstrated by the famous visit of the Ross's Gull to Denver's Cherry Creek Reservoir. This is partly due to human population growth – we provide plenty of irresistible offal in our landfills, as well as numerous venues for gull revelry, drinking, and fine dining among our myriad man-made reservoirs. It is also due to the very source of Colorado's avian diversity itself – the location of Colorado at a continental crossroads, the intersection of the Western mountains and the Eastern plains. In addition to several species of gulls that commonly populate the interior of the continent, Colorado is occasionally visited by maritime stragglers from all directions of the compass – north, south, east, and west. To the delight of birders at least twenty-one species of gulls have graced Colorado's lakes and landfills, and more species are certain to show up in the future. A small group of birders suffers an odd predilection for studying gulls and that group is always on the lookout for Colorado's next gull species. These people call themselves larophiles (the gull's avian family is Laridae), or gull-lovers. Nick Komar is one such larophile. At the January DFO meeting, Nick will present "Gulls of Colorado", a photographic overview of Colorado's gulls, with insights on where they come from, how to identify them, and which ones to look for next.

Meeting Location

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15 p.m.; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30**. If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science. January Meeting Presentation*

Field Trip Summaries for December 2010

Saturday December 4 *Deer Creek Canyon (DCC)*

Leader: Lynn Willcockson. **Observers:** Mark Amershek, Joan Cox, Michael Kiessig, Betsy Shaw, Sue Schulman. **Distance:** 3 miles by car. **Temp** 31 - 42 F. **Habitat:** open fields, stream side, scrub oak. **Totals:** 29 species, 1476 individuals.

Sunday December 5 *Barr Lake and Winter Raptoss (BAR)*

Leader(s): Tim Smart. **Observers:** **Time:** 0800-1315. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Weather:** Mostly clear 23-39. Wind 9 mph dropping to 5. **Totals:** 59 species, 35,822 individuals. **Highlights:** Glaucous Gull, Barn Owl, 5 species of Goose.

Saturday December 11 *Fawnbrook Inn and Northern Foothills (ALLENS Allenspark)*

Leader(s): Mike Serruto and Niña Routh. **Observers:** Jim Duggan, Lyn Graves, Mark Hammershek, Toni Rautus, Jim Rause, Paul Slingsby, Tim Smart. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 26 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Mixed coniferous housing development/Foothills riparian. **Weather:** Party cloudy, 25-50°F, calm. **Totals:** 31 species, 181 individuals.

Highlights: Bald and Golden eagles of the St. Vrain, non-birding: big horn sheep on Colorado Hwy 7.

Tuesday Birders

Dec 7 *Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt and Backyard Feeder (WRG)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 40 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lowland riparian, cottonwood, ponds, willow, cattails, lakes, urban park. elevation 5386'. **Weather:** Cloudy to sunny, 40-50°F, wind NNW 3-10 mph. **Totals:** 45 species 856 individuals.

Dec 14 *Red Rocks Park (RED)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 27. **Time:** 0800-11.30. **Distance:** 01 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Foothills, scrubland, riparian, elevation 6360'. **Weather:** Sunny, 43-60°F, calm, 0-4mph. **Totals:** 17 species, 96 individuals.

We hope to receive the Christmas Count summaries for the next issue.

Call for Mini-Grant Applicants

Funds help organizers create fun neighborhood events

Ithaca, NY--The Cornell Lab of Ornithology's "Celebrate Urban Birds" project is now accepting applications for another round of mini-grants. Grants average \$250-\$500 and are used to fund neighborhood events that promote an appreciation for birds and nature. Neighborhood events or projects feature activities involving birds, community service, art, greening, and science. Participants collect simple information about common birds and report to the Cornell Lab. Celebrate Urban Birds mini-grants could be used to support a bird-activity day at a local museum, afterschool program, library, or community center, or fund art and gardening activities at your club, business, school, senior center, or neighborhood. To apply for a mini-grant, visit www.CelebrateUrbanBirds.org. Organizations working with underserved communities are strongly encouraged to apply. No experience with birds is required.

Deadline to apply is Feb. 15, 2011

Celebrate Urban Birds is a free, year-round citizen science project in which participants watch birds in their neighborhoods and report what they see. This information helps scientists better understand how birds survive in cities and make use of green spaces, including parks and gardens.

Contact: Karen Purcell, Project Leader, (607) 254-2455, urbanbirds@cornell.edu

DFO President's Update

Joy of Being a Trip Leader: We need more people to be trip leaders. Some of our more reliable leaders would appreciate if they did not get asked to lead so frequently. I think being a trip leader is fun and nearly every DFO member should consider being a trip leader.

- I do think it brings good luck to bird with others. I have seen many new bird species on my trips, including Golden-crowned Sparrow and Pacific Wren. Both of these species were plucked by some of the more capable people coming along.
- It is more fun to bird with a group. I love the camaraderie of birders, and the keen sense of humor of most. It is just plain fun to go birding.

Lastly, the birding community needs all capable leaders to contribute in some way. So please consider leading a trip.

If you have not been a trip leader before, then ask for some support. I can easily find someone who can go along and guide you through anything tricky (this is a small list). Also, most all of the group is supportive of the trip leader on bird finding, identification and group management.

Please give one of our trip scheduler a call to coordinate. Alison Kondler (303-904-9140) can get you on the trip leader database. Jill Boice (303-863-7580) and Mary Geder (best email for now at mary.geder@encana.com or call 303-981-8823) to are new trip schedulers and would most appreciate a call. Also feel free to call on trip scheduler veteran, Jackie King.

Also Note: Dr. Carol Blackard, one of our most helpful board members, is filling in as a trip scheduler for the month of April. So please be responsive to her as well.

Still Need 2 More Trip Schedulers:

We will need 2 others to become trip schedulers. With 2 more volunteers, each person would need to spend 4 to 6 hours every 6 months to recruit trip leaders. This job could take 4 to 8 emails and 4 to 8 calls to recruit 8 to 10 trip leaders each month. This is a big help to organization and helps support our over 70 year tradition of offering 100 field trips per year. Please contact me, Charles Thornton-Kolbe, at 303-777-7588 to volunteer. Please note that we do not have trip schedulers for the month of July and October. We will not be offering trips during these months unless someone volunteers as a trip scheduler by March 2011. We are an all volunteer organization and we do need help in this critical role.

Thank you for donation to Educational Endowment Fund: Nina Routh, Karen vonSaltza, Diane & Jeff Carter, Von Fransen, Sue Clasen, Peter Mulholland, Kiki Widjaja, Tom Parchman, Jeff Dawson, Kevin Corwin, Jo-Ann Garavaglia & Ann Sprague, Diane Hutton,

New Members: Welcome!

Jean Dupree & Bart Torbert, 1217 8th St, Golden, CO 80401-1091, 303.279.8861
S.G. Raymond, 844 Spring Drive, Boulder, CO 80303
Marcel and Joel Such, 1186 Rowell Dr, Lyons, CO 80540, 303.823.6084

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Charles Thornton-Kolbe, 2284 S Josephine Street, Denver CO 80210, 303.777.7588
Charles@pibird.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Lynn Willcockson, 2698 S Niagara, Denver CO 80224 303.757.7000
lynnliz2698@aol.com

TREASURER

Bob Shade, 9353 W Nevada Place, Lakewood CO 80226-3029, 303.975.2476
WRSHADE3@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Niña Routh (10) nrouth@copper.net

DIRECTORS

Alison Kondler (13) fieldbirder@msn.com
 Rick and Connie Steinkamp (12) ricconcal@comcast.net
 John Drummond (12) jxdrummo@aol.com
 Carol Blackard (11) carol-blackard@comcast.net
 Ira Sanders (11) greatauk@msn.com
 Chris Blakeslee (10) chrisabla@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Patty Echelmeyer, 303.233.4947,
 Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct
 Jackie King, 303.287.1644,
 Feb, May, Aug, Nov
 Meredith Anderson, 303.280.8576
 Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec
 Support Field Trip Coordinators: Mary Geder
 303.986.6127, Alison Kondler 303.904.9140 and
 Jill Boice.303.863.7580

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, 303.646.3829
veronicaholt@Q.com

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome and openly solicited. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Debra Bogar, 9475 W. Hinsdale Pl., Littleton, CO 80232, 303.932-7607, dafb@earthlink.net.

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dacbcocook@comcast.net

Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421, email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is back-up contact person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email d_d_hill@comcast.net.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists](#) Web Site.

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

January 24

Nick Komar

**"Gulls of Colorado -- Everything You Always Wanted to Know (But
Were Afraid to Ask!)"**

February 28

**Paul Bannick - Owls and Woodpeckers of the West:
A Visual Feast**



The Lark Bunting

MARCH 2011

www.dfobirders.org

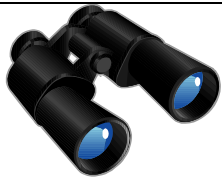
Volume 47, Number 3

March 28, 2011: A Meeting/A Field Trip: DMNS Behind the Scenes...

DFO is all about field trips! We offer two free birding field trips a week about fifty weeks a year. We don't know of any other organization in the country that offers this quantity and quality of free trips year round (if you are acquainted with a group that does please let us know).

So it is no surprise that as a part of the stellar lineup of presentations DFO vice president Lynn Willcockson has offered in the 2010/2011 birding season he has included a field trip, **an unusual field trip**. As with all DFO field trips there will be good companionship AND some surprises. This field trip will begin as all our monthly meetings do, at 7:30 p.m. in Ricketson Auditorium at the Museum. After our usual warm up activities emceed by DFO president Chuck Thornton-Kolbe, we will depart on a fun-filled, informative expedition into the halls and corridors of the

Continued on page 3



March Field Trips

Saturday, March 5th *Photographing Dippers - Lair o'the Bear*

Leader: Lee Farrell **Time:** 08:00 **Phone:** 303-932-7859 **Meeting Place and Directions:** Lair o'the Bear parking lot. From Morrison & C-470, drive 4 miles west on C-74 to park entrance on left. This trip will give nature / bird photographers a fantastic chance to capture American Dippers with beautiful icy backdrops! Join Lee Farrell on this unique DFO trip. Must have 300MM or greater for best images. About the leader: Lee gained an appreciation for wildlife and conservation at an early age. With more than 35 years experience as an avid nature photographer he now finds wild birds as one of his favorite subjects. To see some of Lee's work visit <http://lee13.smugmug.com>. Please call Lee with any questions and to PRE-REGISTER. Half day trip at most.

Sunday, March 6th

Rosy Finches & More!

Leader: Mike Henwood **Time:** 07:30 **Email/Phone:** hawkhen@aol.com, 303-716-8551 **Meeting Place and Directions:** C-470 and Morrison exit at dirt parking lot East of Conoco (3485 S Rooney Rd, Morrison). This trip will be heading to Red Rocks then off to Conifer to hit a number of mountain feeders in the morning. We'll be looking for Rosy and Cassin's Finches, Pine Grosbeaks, and other mountain residents. Please PRE-REGISTER. This trip is limited to 12 people. Sign up early to lock in your spot! Half day trip.

Saturday, March 12th

88th & South Platte

Leader: Chishun Kwong **Time:** 09:00 **Email:** chishunkwong@yahoo.com **Meeting Place:** East 88th and the South Platte River – From I-76 take E. 88th Ave. exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead. Join us on a half day trip to the section of South Platte River in Thornton. Expect to see a good variety of ducks, with luck we may find Barrow's Goldeneye and Long-tailed Duck. This area also hosts a variety of wintering raptors. We will walk on a mostly flat and paved path for a mile or more. No RSVP needed, email the leader with any questions.

Sunday, March 13th

Canyon City Area with AVAS

Leader: Setta Moss **Contact Information:** 719-429-3821 **Time:** 08:30 **Meeting Place:** Loaf N Jug at H50 & 9th Street in Canon City. We will be birding at Tunnel Drive, Canon City Riverwalk with the Arkansas Valley Audubon Society. We'll be visiting wintering sapsucker sites and pinyon-juniper habitat. Hope to see Rufous-crowned Sparrows, Canyon Towhees, Canyon Wren, Rock Wren, wintering

Continued on next page

March Field Trips, continued

sapsuckers, Juniper Titmouse, and Bushtits. About the leader: SeEtta has been leading birding trips in southeast Colorado, including for 3 CFO Conventions, for 15 years. Since she retired (at least from paid work) 8 years ago she has been birding almost every day and enjoys intensive field work with special species including Black Phoebe, hybrid Black-Eastern Phoebe, and wintering sapsuckers. In addition to being an avid birder and bird photographer, she is a passionate conservationist. **Please call number above if you are planning on attending.** Bring lunch, snacks, binoculars, scope and water. Ending time 2 pm.

Saturday, March 19th

Beginner Birders Welcome Trip - South Platte Park

Leader: Richard Holmes Anderson **Contact Information:** 303 757-4582 **Time:** 08:00 **Meeting Place and**

Directions: Carson Nature Center - North of Mineral Ave, 1 block west of S. Santa Fe Drive. Directly west of Aspen Groove Shopping Center. This is a fantastic opportunity for casual or beginning birders to learn about wintering ducks in breeding plumage and other easy to spot birds. Including, Hooded Merganser, Northern Pintail, and Pied-billed Grebe. Also hope to see Red-tailed Hawk, Belted Kingfisher and early migrants. If you love birds and want to find out more about them, this is the trip for you! This trip welcomes non-DFO members as well as members. Children welcomed!. Please PRE-REGISTER by calling the number above. Space limited to 20 people. About the leader: Richard is a retired college professor and a casual birder for most of his life (began birding when 10 years old) and recently completed ASGD Master Birder Class. Half Day Trip.

Sunday, March 20th

Morgan County Hotspots

Leader: Joe Roller **Contact Information:** 303-204-0828 **Time:** 07:00 (DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS)

Meeting Place: Division of Wildlife - 6060 North Broadway – Exit I-25 at 58th Ave, go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right. *Trip description below written by Joe* - We will carpool and head out to Jackson Reservoir, then hit other Morgan County Hotspots. Waterfowl can be plentiful at this time of year. Birders are advised to call the leader before trip. The trip will cater to birders of all levels of experience, from eager neophytes to jaded pros. This will be an all-day trip, returning to the DOW around 5 PM, so bring lunch, water, snacks and a spotting scope if you have one. Dress for weather. This trip is limited to eighty participants, so sign up early! ;)

Tuesday March 22nd

Fountain Creek Area & Big Johnson Reservoir - WEEKDAY!

Leader: Ken Pals **Contact Information:** 719-471-0687, **Time:** 08:30 **Meeting Place:** Fountain Creek Nature Center - 320 Pepper Grass Lane, Fountain, CO 80817. Might we still find the Pine Warbler? We'll see plenty of waterfowl, resident land birds, and possibly a few shorebirds while we explore the best birding locations in a park that lists over 290 species. Bring water, snack, lunch and binoculars. Scopes are extremely helpful for birding at Big Johnson Reservoir. A \$5 donation or birdseed for the nature center is welcomed. RSVP is appreciated especially for carpool options from Denver. 1/2 - 3/4 day trip depending on weather and birds. About the leader: Retired Fountain Creek Nature Center supervisor/naturalist with 45 years of birding experience.

Saturday, March 26th

Northwest Metro Lakes

Leader: Chuck Lowrie **Contact Information:** 303-455-8417 **Time:** 09:00 **Meeting Place:** Sloan's Lake parking area on the SE corner of 25th and Sheridan. Full Day Trip. Bring Lunch. We'll be looking for Blue-winged, Cinnamon Teal, Say's Phoebe and Meadowlarks plus other early migrants. There will be quite a bit of walking (Up to 3 miles) as we will visit lesser-known lakes. If there is a lot of snow, we'll go to lakes that don't require walking or much walking and make it a shorter day. Please PRE-REGISTER with Chuck. This trip is limited to 10 people. Sign up quick to lock in your spot! About the leader: Chuck is the current president of the Boulder Birding Club and has led combined DFO and BBC trips to the western slope and North Park.

Sunday, March 27th

Trinidad Area

Leader: Mark Peterson **Time:** TBD **Email:** mpeterson33@yahoo.com **Meeting Location(s):** TBD. Expect to carpool from Denver area and possibly from Colorado Springs. More details will be given closer to the date. Warmer weather birding in March! We'll be birding Pinyon and riparian habitats, looking for Pinyon birds and waterfowl. There will be extensive, but mostly easy walking (possibly up to 2 miles). Full day trip. Please email Mark to register and to receive more information. It should be a fantastic trip.

Scheduled by Alison Kondler

Meeting Presentation, continued

Denver Museum of Nature and Science. This field trip will require NO heavy boots, NO walking stick, NO telescope, NO backpack, NO sack lunch or water, NO sunscreen... It is a simple stroll into the climate controlled “wildlife sanctuary” that is the DMNS.

The focus of this field trip will be the Denver Museum of Nature and Science’s Ornithology collection. This collection spans 90+ years and consists of an ever expanding array of over 43,000 bird study skins and skeletons, 7,500+ egg sets, 1,200+ nests, bird DNA specimens, bird exo and endo parasites, a bird tissue collection, and much more. How about having a chance to see the Museum’s massive Elephant Bird (extinct) egg collected in the 17th century, or specimens of Carolina Parakeets and Passenger Pigeons? The Museum’s collection is one of the largest and most important in the Rocky Mountain Region.

You won’t see all of these, but will see a brief slide show about the collections, extensive displays from these collections, as well as materials from the Museum’s Bailey Library and Archives. You may get to compare the Ivory-billed, Imperial, and Pileated Woodpeckers; view eggs and nests; try and match study skins with their correct skeletons; study morphological changes within a specific species which have occurred over a 50 or 60 year period; read original curator expedition journals or field notes; and maybe even examine early ornithological field sketches. Pay attention: there may be a quiz!

Our expert field trip leaders will be Jeff Stephenson and Andy Doll. We all know Jeff as the DMNS Zoology Department’s Collections Manager and liaison to DFO. He is the guy who smiles when one hands him a dead, frozen bird bagged in plastic. Jeff has worked for the DMNS for 20+ years in many capacities. He has prepared study skins, dug fossils, and collected dung beetles. He knows the history and he knows the collection!

Our second leader is Andy Doll who is the Zoology Department’s new Ornithology Fellow. Andy was introduced to DFO at the January meeting between the hummingbirds and the gulls. Andy comes to the Museum from the University of Colorado where he is a graduate student studying Dunlin breeding in the North Slope region of Alaska. He has extensive experience working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Audubon Society, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and SWCA Environmental Consultants on various bird-related projects. As the Ornithology Fellow he has already jumped in and is working on a number of projects in the ornithology collection such as ground truthing the Museum’s new bird database and developing ornithology related programming such as this indoor field trip for DFO.

Those of you who participated in the DMNS Zoology Department’s “Brain Teasers for Bird Brains” program last May will remember how much fun it was, how informative it was, and how challenging it was. Everyone who attended came away with new insights into the collections and knowing more about the birds we love chasing.

On March 28th bring your binoculars, your hand lenses, your thinking caps, your comfortable walking shoes and join Jeff and Andy in this fun indoor Museum field trip experience. The results won’t appear on eBird, but they will be memorable.

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum’s west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15 p.m.; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30 P.M.** If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.*

Future Programs

- April 25, 2011 - New ABA President
- No meeting in May, June, or July 2011— Enjoy our extensive offering of field trips..
- Next DFO Meeting is August 22, 2011

So Sayeth the Speaker...

Threatening to make us all larophiles, Nick Komar walked us through a photographic array of the 21 gulls that have been seen in Colorado in order of size, small to large, as in the table below:

Gull (small to large)	Distinguishing characteristics	Travel itinerary (Where, when they breed, migrate)
Little Gull	Dark underwings, rounded wings	
Bonaparte's Gull	<u>Black bill</u> , black auricular spot, underwings white, black heads in summer	Common in the fall, hang around Pueblo in winter
Ross's Gull	Like Bonaparte, but dark underwings, pointed wings, <u>diamond-shaped tail</u> , slight pinkish underside	
Sabine's Gull	Strongly patterned wing and forked tail	High arctic breeder, some migrate through US
Black-headed Gull	Like Bonaparte, but dark feathers on underside. Head not true black, but very dark brown	Winters in NE US and also Asia. Only strays here
Black-legged Kittiwake	Black mark on neck, dark gray on back, heavier bill	Usually 2 or 3 in fall migration
Ivory Gull	White bird with <u>black legs</u>	High arctic breeder, one record for CO
Franklin's Gull	Black head, loses hood in fall, sometimes partial hood present (differentiates from Laughing), can be pinkish, "laughing" all the time.	Migrates through prairie states, breeds in pot-holes north of Colorado
Laughing Gull	Bigger, longer wings than Franklin's. Loses hood, but <u>completely</u> , bill heavier than Franklin's	Breeds southern coastal US
Mew Gull	Ring around bill in winter, but bill smaller than RB Gull. Darker gray than RB Gull. Scapular crescent white and bigger than RB. <u>Dark eye</u>	Alaska, Northern Canada, only a small strip of range on CA coast, 3-4 here in fall, winter, spring every year
Ring-billed Gull	<u>Yellow eye and legs</u> , pale gray mantle, takes 2 yrs to reach adult plumage. White tips larger in full adult plumage. Basic plumage w gray speckled head, alternate w completely white head	
California Gull	1 st yr – bicolored bill 2 nd yr – gray back, brown wings <u>Dark eyes. Black and red spot on bill. Dark eye differentiates from Herring</u>	The only species that breed in CO – Riverside Res, Weld Cty
Lesser Black-backed Gull	Late molter (seen here molting in Sept)	A regular visitor ea winter
Iceland Gull	White, like Glaucous, but smaller	
Thayer's Gull (frustrating to ID)	Like Herring or Iceland On Jan 30 still has dark head Late molting into basic plumage (unlike Herring) Adult looks like Herring only has <u>dark eye</u> White patch Very little black in wing tips	
Herring Gull	Juvenile through October 1st basic by Nov/Dec- "muddy-looking", scapular fading Inner extended primaries pale <u>Light eye</u> differentiates from California Adult has red spot on bill	
Glaucous-winged Gull	Overall pale <u>Heavy black bill</u> Lacks black wing-tip	Alaska breeder
Glaucous Gull	Large, white gull with <u>pale gray</u> back	5-6 here every winter
Kelp Gull	Dark back (darkest black of all the black backed gulls), wings long, <u>Massive bill</u> Green-yellow legs	From So Am
Slaty-backed Gull	Pink legs, pale eye, darkness of back same as Lesser Lot of white in wingtips	No Siberia or Alaska, we don't get many
Great Black-backed Gull	Narrow black tail band	

Continued on next page

DFO Wants You...th

In November, 2010, your board set out to work toward two improvement goals gleaned from the membership-wide survey, one of which is to involve more youth in birding and bird appreciation. The DFO Subcommittee on Youth has 3 members, Lynn Willcockson, Carol Blackard, Scott Blackard. We have many ideas, some listed below.



1. Trips – Invite youth to our trips, treat them right, ?assign mentor as needed
2. Special trips for youths – once a month, but need to recruit kids, leaders
3. Offer leaders and trips at state parks or other camps (church or otherwise) and advertise as another activity like archery or canoeing.
4. Provide info and resources to teachers, scout leaders, etc about our trips, camps and other opportunities (Cornell, Audubon, Carson, RMBO, Museum, ABA) Teachers of science have two seminars ea year, one in September, one in November – present or have booth there
5. Send youths to camps, festivals, conferences, out of town trips as we get to know them and find the really special young birders to encourage
6. Purchase a cache of binoculars and simple birding books to loan to youths
7. Act as mentors for scouts with birding badges, or other really interested kids, older ornithology students
8. Flat Birding for elementary classrooms, competitions for older kids

We will need people interested in leading

We will need people interested in doing the foot work, mostly delivering our flyers, explaining our offerings, etc to teachers, scout leaders, camp administrators. They will also need to do **phone work**, calling to identify teachers especially amenable to our ideas, calling to pitch the idea to camp leaders, etc.

So, we need a Youth Recruitment Army to really make a difference.

If you want us to proceed, if you are there to make this happen, we can do some wonderful things to get youth addicted to birds and birding. Without you, though, all these ideas may just have to die on the table. It's up to you.

If you haven't already signed up, please call Carol Blackard to do so. 303 740-6072

Additional Reports

Species	Date	Number	Location	County	Observers & comments
Snow Goose	Jan 11	80	Franktown	Douglas	Dave Rapley
White-winged Dove	Jan 19	1	Centennial	Arapaho	Bruce Leigh; photographs
Varied Thrush	Jan 4-12, 31	1	Ken Caryl	Jefferson	Dan & Marcia Ferguson; photographs
Gray Catbird	Jan 12-31	1	Roxborough Village	Douglas	E B Ellis
Canyon Towhee	Nov - Jan 6 +	1	Parker	Douglas	Lee & Barb Croissant; photographs
Bullock's Oriole	Jan 30-31	1	Parker	Douglas	Andy Spellman



This female Bullock's Oriole was visiting photographer Andy Spellman's feeder in Parker.

So Sayeth the Speaker...continued

Plumage Schmumage: Juvenile -> Basic -> Alternate (breeding) -> Back to Basics, and then Alternate, etc

Where to find gulls: reservoirs, landfills. If you can stand being very cold and have a telescope, you can find roosting gulls in the center of lakes

Noteworthy gull references (all have good maps):

- *The Sibley Guide to Birds* by David Sibley
- *Gulls of North America, Europe and Asia*, by Klaus Malling Olsen and Hans Larsson (gulls of northern hemisphere only) This book has a wing-tip comparison table which helps in identification of gulls
- *Gulls of the Americas* (photographic guide) by Steve N.G. Howell and Jon Dunn, 2007 (gulls of Northern and South American only) This book has a Kodak gray scale table on all the included species.
- *The Large Gulls of North America* by Larry Rosche and Jon Dunn, 1997 (video) – only 13 species of the above 21.

DFO thanks you, Nick Komar, for your expertise and willingness to share. Exactly what we needed!!

By Carol Blackard, who tried very hard not to glaze over, but might have made a mistake or two.

Field Trip Summaries for December 2010

Saturday December 4 *Deer Creek Canyon (DCC)*

Leader: Lynn Willcockson. **Observers:** Mark Amershek, Joan Cox, Michael Kiessig, Betsy Shaw, Sue Schulman. **Distance:** 3 miles by car. **Temp** 31 - 42 F. **Habitat:** open fields, stream side, scrub oak. **Totals:** 29 species, 1476 individuals.

Sunday December 5 *Barr Lake and Winter Raptoss (BAR)*

Leader(s): Tim Smart. **Observers:** **Time:** 0800-1315. **Distance:** 8 miles by car, 1 mile on foot. **Weather:** Mostly clear 23-39. Wind 9 mph dropping to 5. **Totals:** 59 species, 35,822 individuals. **Highlights:** Glaucous Gull, Barn Owl, 5 species of Goose.

Saturday December 11 *Fawnbrook Inn and Northern Foothills (ALLENS Allenspark)*

Leader(s): Mike Serruto and Niña Routh. **Observers:** Jim Duggan, Lyn Graves, Mark Hammershek, Toni Rautus, Jim Rause, Paul Slingsby, Tim Smart. **Time:** 0800-1230. **Distance:** 26 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Mixed coniferous housing development/Foothills riparian. **Weather:** Party cloudy, 25-50°F, calm. **Totals:** 31 species, 181 individuals.

Highlights: Bald and Golden eagles of the St. Vrain, non-birding: big horn sheep on Colorado Hwy 7.

Tuesday Birders

Dec 7 *Prospect Park, Wheat Ridge Greenbelt and Backyard Feeder (WRG)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Else van Erp. **Observers:** 40 (two groups). **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 3 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Lowland riparian, cottonwood, ponds, willow, cattails, lakes, urban park. elevation 5386'. **Weather:** Cloudy to sunny, 40-50°F, wind NNW 3-10 mph. **Totals:** 45 species 856 individuals.

Dec 14 *Red Rocks Park (RED)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 27. **Time:** 0800-11.30. **Distance:** 01 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Foothills, scrubland, riparian, elevation 6360'. **Weather:** Sunny, 43-60°F, calm, 0-4mph. **Totals:** 17 species, 96 individuals.

57th Annual Denver Christmas Bird Count

Day, Date, and Time: Saturday, December 18, 2010, 6:30 am to 5:00 pm.

Compiler: Joey Kellner **Feeder Coordinators:** Patty Echelmeyer and Tina Jones

Weather: Mostly clear à Partly Cloudy **Temperature:** 0 to 25 deg. F **Wind:** variable, 0 to 15 mph

Snow Cover: 0 to 3" **Still Water:** Partly open **Moving Water:** Partly open

Observers: 110 (92 in 32 parties, 18 watchers at 18 feeders)

Total Party Hours: 226.25 (142 on foot, 84.25 by car)

Total Party Miles: 722.5 (90.25 on foot, 514 by car)

Hours Spent Watching Feeders: 65.0

Count Totals: 104 species; 37,399 individuals

Participants by Area (Area Leader's names in **bold**):

Area 1. Red Rocks Park (RRP): Mark Amershek, **Bob Brown**, Tom Casadevall, Joe Roller, Mario Seminara

Area 2. Lower Bear Creek (LBC): Jerry Cech, Rick Creswell, Mike Henwood, Cynthia Madsen, Kelly Miller, **Karen Von Saltza**

Area 2A. Bear Creek Lake Park (BCP): **Kathy Hawkins**, Kris Koff

Area 3. Bow Mar/Marston (BMM): Mary Cay Burger, Terry Cookro, Joan Cox, Gale Evans, **Kay Niyo**, Tim Smart

Area 4A. Lower South Platte-east (LSP): Bob Buttery, Patty Echelmeyer, Nelson Ford, **Ed Holub**, Thomas Holub (age 11)

Area 4B. Lower South Platte-west (LSP): Steve Kingswood, **Robert Shade**

Area 5. Highline Ditch (HLD): **Nancy Crews**, Alan Deegan, Rebecca Price

Area 6. Plum Creek (PCK): Dan Brooke, **Norm Erthal**, Cheryl Teuton

Area 7A. Middle South Platte (MSP): **Randy Lentz**

Area 7B. Middle South Platte (MSP): Dale Brinker, Margaret Brinker, Susie Hiskey, Hugh Kingery, **Urling Kingery**, Deb Ostergard, Mike Sorruto, Scott Yarberry

Area 8. Chatfield Reservoir (CHA): Paul Differding, **Joey Kellner**, Ames Rau, Charlie Schmucker, Jeff Stroup

Area 9. Upper South Platte (USP): Betty Glass, **Jill Holden**, Mary Keithler

Area 10. Lower Deer Creek (LDC): Liz Willcockson, **Lynn Willcockson**

Area 11. Upper Deer Creek (UDC): Jim Duggan, Lyn Graves, Norm Lewis, Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, Betsy Shaw, **Paul Slingsby**

Area 12. Yegge Peak (YPK): Audrey Boag, **Ann Bonnell**, Celia Greenman, Donna Keslin, Michael Kiessig, Steven Sieders, Else Van Erp

Area 13. Doublehead Mountain (DHM): **Amy Davis**, Nancy Davis, Tim Davis

Area 14. North Turkey Creek (NTC): Ed Furlong, Larry Modesitt, **Dick Schottler**

Area 15. Indian Hills (IHL): Susan Harper, Alison Kondler, Kathanne Lynch, Dick Prickett, Warren Roske, **Sherman Wing**

Area 16. Upper Bear Creek (UBC): Bob Santangelo, **Tom Parchman**

Area 17. Ken Caryl Ranch (KCR): **Tom Bush**, Lee Farrell, Linda Farrell, Clint Shoemaker

Area 18. Garrison Gate (GGT): **Steve Stachowiak**

Area 19. Morrison/Willow Brook (MWB): (Not counted this year)

Area 20. Willow Creek (WCK): **Doris Cruze**, Barbara Shissler, Cindy Valentine, Peggy Wait, Dennis Wojcicki

Area 21. Mt. Lindo/Willow Springs (MLW): Jeff Dawson, Laura Wathen, **Wayne Wathen**

“Roving Expert and Photographer” – **Glenn Walbek** – Thanks for all your help Glenn!

57th Annual Denver Christmas Bird Count, continued

HIGHLIGHTS

by Joey Kellner, Compiler

The 2010 Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) took place on December 18th, the 57th consecutive year that the Denver Field Ornithologists has conducted a Christmas Count within the same 15-mile diameter Count circle established in 1954 and centered just north of the old Ken Caryl Ranch entrance. The weather on count day was mostly sunny with calm to moderate winds. One area was not counted this year due to sickness of the area leader (hogback habitat from Morrison to Bowles Ave.). A beautiful day to be out with the team reporting a respectable 37,399 individual birds of 104 species recorded by 92 field observers and 18 feeder watchers. Two new species, Bonaparte's Gull and Curve-billed Thrasher were added to the cumulative Denver CBC list in 2010 - Glenn Walbek found a Bonaparte's Gull in area 8 (Chatfield Reservoir) and Bob Brown and his team including "dedicated Feeder Watcher" Joe Roller noted the Curve-billed Thrasher in area 1 (Red Rocks Park) was still coming to the feeders at the Trading Post. The grand total of species seen since 1954 thus goes to 197. The other "rare" birds (seen on less than 10% of the previous Counts) were Lesser Black-backed Gull (3rd record), Glaucous Gull (5th record) found by the Chatfield Reservoir team in area 8 and a Say's Phoebe (4th record) found by Bob Shade's team in area 4B. "Uncommon" birds seen this year included Ross's Goose (area 3 & area 4b), Tundra Swan (area 3), Long-tailed Duck (area 3), Pacific Loon (area 3), Eared Grebe (area 8), Thayer's Gull (area 8) and Golden-crowned Sparrow (area 1).

Record-high individual numbers were established for **eight** species: Cackling Goose (2534 vs. 1453 in 2007), Tundra Swan tied the high count of 2 set back in 1972, Common Merganser (3727 vs 1975 in 2004), Eared Grebe (25 vs 8 in 2007), Western Grebe (34 vs 25 in 1996), American Kestrel (72 vs 66 in 1997), Lesser Black-backed Gull (2 vs 1 in 1996 & 2006), Eurasian Collared-Dove (147 vs 32 in 2009), American Crow (3253 vs 3130 in 1997).

One notable species was seen in **far** fewer numbers than usual this year was the Red-breasted Nuthatch (29 individuals seen, last time it was this low or lower was 15 in 1989). Amazingly, Ferruginous Hawk was missed for the first time since 1979.

The ten most numerous species observed on the Count were:

1. Canada Goose (11,833), 2. Common Merganser (3,727), 3. American Crow (3,253), 4. Mallard (2,621), 5. Cackling Goose (2,534), 6. Red-winged Blackbird (1,348), 7. European Starling (1,222), 8. House Finch (1,115), 9. Ring-billed Gull (1,051), 10. Dark-eyed Junco (893). Together, these ten species accounted for 79.3 percent of the birds counted, with Canada Geese alone representing 31.6 percent of the total. One additional species, Ring-necked Pheasant, was observed in the Count circle during Count Week by a feeder watcher but not on the 18th.

As compiler of the 57th Denver Christmas Bird Count, I want to thank all of the field observers and feeder watchers for participating. Special thanks go to the Area Leaders whose efforts made this Count a success, to Patty Echelmeyer and Tina Jones for their efforts once again in lining up the feeder watchers and compiling the feeder results. Thanks also to Skot Latona and South Platte Park (South Suburban Parks and Recreation) for the use of the Carson Nature Center for our compilation meeting. Lastly, thanks to all those that brought drinks and food to share! Sharing food and friendship after a day in the field is a great way to relax before the holidays! Next year's compilation "dinner" will be even bigger and better!

The Black Forest CBC tallied 38 species and 1433 individuals, way down from the highest totals of 48 species, 2696 individuals. We observed a notable lack of cones on the ponderosas, which reduced the number of woodpeckers, chickadees, nuthatches, and finches. Horned Larks headed the list of individuals (253) followed by 160 Starlings, 149 Canada Geese, and 102 American Crows. Examples of reduced conifer birds: 21 Steller's Jays (61 last year); 2 Red-breasted Nuthatches (28); 21 White-breasted (57); 74 Pygmies (201); 0 Cassin's Finches (21); 0 Red Crossbills (93); and 5 Pine Siskins (137). Also, 1 Townsend's Solitaire (4). Several parties searched for Short-eared Owls without success. We had one new bird for the count: fourth from the end of one V of a flock of honking Canada Geese flying over the Peaceful Valley Scout Ranch, we saw One Snow Goose. **Hugh Kingery**

DFO President's Update

Need 2 More Trip Schedulers:

We will need 2 others to become trip schedulers. With 2 more volunteers, each person would need to spend 2 to 6 hours every 6 months to recruit trip leaders. TO BE CLEAR, SCHEDULING TAKES LESS TIME THAN GOING ON A HALF DAY FIELD TRIP. This job could take 4 to 8 emails and 4 to 8 calls to recruit 8 to 10 trip leaders each month. Dr. Carol Blackard stepped into this role for April and got the job done with 2 hours of effort. She found everyone to be enthusiastic about leading a DFO trip. This is a big help to organization and helps support our over 70 year tradition of offering 100 field trips per year.

Please contact me, Charles Thornton-Kolbe, at 303-777-7588 to volunteer.

Please note that we do not have a trip scheduler for the month of October. We will not be offering trips during these months unless someone volunteers as a trip scheduler by March 2011. We are an all volunteer organization and we do need help in this critical role.

More Key Volunteers Needed: Trip Report Compiler:

We need someone to help compile trip reports for Lark Bunting. Deb Bogar has been transferred to Washington DC to be the CEO for the organization she works for. This is a mostly data input task, which takes 3 or 4 hours each month. We could maybe use several people for this task; so, that we could rotate this responsibility around.

We are currently paying someone to do this, but are going to simplify this to keep it down to more reasonable task.

Please contact me, Charles Thornton-Kolbe, at 720-320-1974.

Involving More Young People Quality Improvement Project:

Carol Blackard and Lynn Wilcockson are leading a group to develop more resources to encourage young people to get into bird watching.

They presented some great ideas at the January 2011 member meeting at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science, and they would welcome other ideas, as well. However, what they really need is DFO members to volunteer to help. Without volunteer help, all these ideas and voiced enthusiasm from DFO for young birders cannot become real service and support.

Please contact Carol Blackard at 303-740-6072 to help out more here.

Thank you for donation to Educational Endowment Fund: Peggy Gonder, Ron Carter, Cynthia Madsen, Cris Cook, Elissa & Jon McAlear, Peggy Roberts, Jill Boice, MacKenzie Goldthwait & Douglas Kibbe, Mary Jane Black, Doris Cruze, Rex McGehee, Paul Barrett, Frances Campbell, Tom Pool & Kitsi Atkinson, Jeanne Howell, Sylvia Lewis, Pepe Mendez, Doug & Jan Hodous, Don Mullineaux, Bill & JoAnn Hackos, Mary Geder,

New Members: Welcome!

Thomas Bunker, 3859 Licorice Ct, Castle Rock, CO 80109, 720.470.1046
Nelson Ford, 7570 W Friend Ave, Littleton, CO 80128, 303.973.7539
Pepe Mendez, 2665 S Winona Ct, Denver CO 80219, 303.922.8932
Daryl Michael, 143 Habron Ct, New Lebanon, OH 45345, 937.687.1480
Lynne Miller, PO Box 25471, Colorado Springs, CO 80936, 719.574.5591
Kelly Shipe, 12301 Dawson Rd, Elbert, CO 80106

Tuesday Birders: A special Thank YOU to the Tuesday Birders for \$100.00 donation to help with the printing expenses of the Lark Bunting newsletter

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Charles Thornton-Kolbe, 2284 S Josephine Street, Denver CO 80210, 303.777.7588
Charles@pibird.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Lynn Willcockson, 2698 S Niagara, Denver CO 80224 303.757.7000
lynnliz2698@aol.com

TREASURER

Bob Shade, 9353 W Nevada Place, Lakewood CO 80226-3029, 303.975.2476
WRSHADE3@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Niña Routh (10) nrouth@copper.net

DIRECTORS

Alison Kondler (13) fieldbirder@msn.com
 Rick and Connie Steinkamp (12) ricconcal@comcast.net
 John Drummond (12) jxdrummo@aol.com
 Carol Blackard (11) carol-blackard@comcast.net
 Ira Sanders (11) greatauk@msn.com
 Chris Blakeslee (10) chrisabla@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
 Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
 May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
 Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
 Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
 Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
 Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
 Oct-11 Volunteer Needed
 Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
 Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com
Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome and openly solicited. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21, Elizabeth, CO 8010. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532, veronicaholt@Q.com

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dacbcocook@comcast.net

Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcsisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421, email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is back-up contact person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email d_d_hill@comcast.net.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$ _____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

February 28
Paul Bannick - Owls and Woodpeckers of the West:
A Visual Feast

March 28, 2011
A Meeting/A Field Trip: DMNS Behind the Scenes...



The Lark Bunting

APRIL 2011

www.dfobirders.org

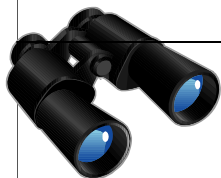
Volume 47, Number 4

A Meeting/A Field Trip: DMNS Behind the Scenes March 28, 2011

DFO is all about field trips! We offer two free birding field trips a week about 50 weeks a year. We don't know of any other organization in the country that offers this quantity and quality of free trips year round (if you are acquainted with a group that does please let us know).

So it is no surprise that as a part of the stellar lineup of presentations DFO vice president Lynn Willcockson has offered in the 2010/2011 birding season, he has included an unusual field trip. As with all DFO field trips there will be good companionship and some surprises. This field trip will begin as all our monthly meetings do, at 7:30 p.m. in Ricketson Auditorium at the Museum. After our usual warm up activities emceed by DFO president Chuck Thornton-Kolbe, we will depart on a fun-filled, informative expedition into the halls and corridors of the

Continued on page 3



April Field Trips

Saturday, April 2 *Cherry Creek State Park*

Leader: Bob Brown, 303 791-6204. Meet at 0830 at the marina closest to the west entrance to the park off Dayton. Park pass required. Excellent for beginning birders. ½ day trip.

Saturday, April 9 *Star K Ranch*

Leader: Mary Ann Bonnell, 303 739-2428. Meet at 0830 at Morrison Nature Center at Star K Ranch, off East Smith Road between Chambers and Airport Blvd. Please register in advance and get specific directions from Mary Ann. Short ½ day trip. Those who wish to prolong the experience can stay and enjoy the Nature Center and the many feeders. Please register in advance so you can be notified in the unlikely event of cancellation. Enjoy the Sand Creek corridor while looking for early migrant songbirds and raptors.

Sunday, April 10 *McCabe Meadows (Formerly Parker Regional)*

Leader: Mary Cay Burger, 303.771.3431. Enjoy a spring walk along Cherry Creek bike path and around the meadow and pond. Meet leader at 0800 in the McCabe Meadows parking lot. It is located 1.3 miles south of Parker Rd and Main St intersection in Parker. It is on the west side of Parker Rd. Turn onto Indian Pipe Lane, then immediate right into parking lot. Bring water. We will be away from the cars. Time and weather permitting we will also check the pond at Main St and Cherry Creek. Plan on half to three-quarters of a day. Bring lunch if you can stay the full time.

Saturday, April 16 *South Mesa Trail*

Leader: Paula Hansley, 720 890-2628 or (cell) 303 263-1714. Meet at 0800 at RTD parking lot at southeast corner of intersection of State Highways 93 and 170 (Marshall Rd) for carpooling. ½ day trip. Expect to see foothills species on an easy walk through shrubby, deciduous, and pine woodland. Bring snack and water.

Wednesday, April 20 *Chatfield Reservoir*

Leader: Bob Shade, 303 975-2476. Meet at 0700 at Swim Beach just after the west entrance to Chatfield State Park. Park pass required (can pay for the day at the entrance kiosk). ½ day. Bring water, but lunch, snacks optional. Short drives and easy walking about the park. See the first passerines or waders, maybe even an Osprey.

Thursday, April 28 *Birding Castle Rock and other South Metro Areas*

Leader: Chuck Thornton-Kolbe. Meet ten minutes before 7:30 AM at northeast corner of the K-Mart

Continued on next page

April Field Trips, continued

parking lot just about ½ mile south of I-25 and Broadway (near corner of Alameda and Broadway). We will form carpools at the K-Mart parking lot. Please get there by 7:25 AM. If you want to meet us at the Castle Rock Museum, please be there at **8:00 AM**. This trip is part of a celebration of Castle Rock, sponsored by the local historical society and Denver Field Ornithologists. Direction to their location can be found on their website at <http://castlerockmuseum.org/>

We will be looking for early migrants and other birds in the area all day long. This is a bit of a first time adventure, but we will have guidance from some other area birders (including John Drummond though he will be in Florida). We will likely start in Castle Rock and bird a few sites there and nearby. After lunch, we will wander into El Paso or Douglas county to find a few more goodies. **Some participants may want to go to the Castle Rock Museum and enjoy their bird exhibit.** This will be a all day long trip or a half-day, as is your choice.

Bring: The day will likely be nice, but please bring layers of clothing and coats (including rain gear), binoculars, scope (if you have one), lunch, snack, beverages. Bring breakfast if you have not eaten before leaving. Also two way radio and cell phones can be helpful to support car-to-car communication. Bring about \$10 to \$15 for your gas share if leaving from Denver or otherwise \$5 to \$10 if leaving from Castle Rock.

If bad weather, come to parking lot, and we will go for it (and maybe consider an alternative plan). No need to RSVP, but do show up on a timely basis to one of these two starting locations.

Saturday, April 23 *Longmont Area*

Leader: Chris Owens, 303 422-3728. Meet at 0730 and bird until mid-afternoon. Meet at Jim Hamm Nature Center. From I-25 take Exit 240, go west 4 miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld CO Line Road, then 2 miles north to park on the left at E 17th Ave. Bring lunch, water, sunscreen. We'll be looking for early migrants as well as area residents. Call Chris or email her at kriso2@mindspring.com if you need further information.

Sunday, April 24 *Fountain Creek Regional Park*

Leader: Paul Slingsby, (303) 422-3728 paslingsby@comcast.net. Please register with the leader beforehand. Meet the leader at 0630 at the south-east corner of the Great Indoors parking lot. We will carpool from there. This is just north of C470 on Yosemite. From Denver by I-25 use exit 195, and go West on County Line Road to Yosemite. Take Yosemite south to the Great Indoors store, which will be on the right (west). Fountain Creek Regional Park has good trails for easy walking near ponds, wetlands, grassland and creek. Spring migration should be underway, so expect surprises..Bring lunch. Telescope and 2-way radio will be useful if you wish to bring them. Plan to be back at the carpool meeting place by 1700 at the latest.

Saturday, April 30 *Rocky Mountain Arsenal*

Leader: David Rhoades, 303 424-8633. We'll bird from 0800-1300, expecting to see grassland birds, ducks, raptors, possible early migrants, likely swallows, and possible burrowing owls. Space is limited by the size of the passenger van that we'll use. Meet at the parking lot of the Visitor Center. Call David to reserve a space and to get directions. Lunch optional (BYO).
Compiled by Carol Blackard

DFO birders

I would like to write a thorough biography of the life of Katherine "Birdie" Hurlbutt on her 98th birthday, today Feb 24, 1913, but unfortunately, I lost most of the DFO Historic files [particularly the Ruth Wheeler's scrapbook, which has many Denver Post stories about Hurlbutt to the DMNS Archives, which are not now available to me. Anyway, here is a brief note for the Lark Bunting, thanks to Hugh Kingery for a couple of his remembrances.

Katherine "Birdie" Hurlbutt celebrates her 98th birthday February 24, 2011. Katherine "Birdie" Hurlbutt was born February 24, 1913. She was one of the 40 founders of the Colorado Bird Club in 1935 that became the Denver Field Ornithologists in 1972. In the 1940s, she pioneered Bird Rehab in Colorado taking care and rescuing injured birds of all kinds into her home as a hospital and recovery facility. She was noted several times in the Denver Post as the Birdie lady. She received many reports of injured birds and took in birds of any kind, including pigeons, sparrows, finches, and starlings, even picking them up in her "birdmobile". She had a non-releasable Raven named "Edgar" that lived in a bedroom. She worked at the Federal Center, where she had a popular feeder. Birdie celebrated her 98th birthday on Feb 24 at the Millbrook Home at 7997 South Wabash Court in Englewood, CO. 80122, phone 303 221-7196, visiting hours 8AM-8PM.

Peaceful birding, **Warren I. Finch, DFO Historian**

March Meeting, continued

Denver Museum of Nature and Science. This field trip will require NO heavy boots, NO walking stick, NO telescope, NO backpack, NO sack lunch or water, NO sunscreen... It is a simple stroll into the climate controlled “wildlife sanctuary” that is the DMNS.

The focus of this field trip will be the Denver Museum of Nature and Science’s Ornithology collection. This collection spans 90+ years and consists of an ever expanding array of over 43,000 bird study skins and skeletons, 7,500+ egg sets, 1,200+ nests, bird DNA specimens, bird exo and endo parasites, a bird tissue collection, and much more. How about having a chance to see the Museum’s massive Elephant Bird (extinct) egg collected in the 17th century, or specimens of Carolina Parakeets and Passenger Pigeons? The Museum’s collection is one of the largest and most important in the Rocky Mountain Region.

You won’t see all of these, but will see a brief slide show about the collections, extensive displays from these collections, as well as materials from the Museum’s Bailey Library and Archives. You may get to compare the Ivory-billed, Imperial, and Pileated Woodpeckers; view eggs and nests; try and match study skins with their correct skeletons; study morphological changes within a specific species which have occurred over a 50 or 60 year period; read original curator expedition journals or field notes; and maybe even examine early ornithological field sketches. Pay attention: there may be a quiz!

Our expert field trip leaders will be Jeff Stephenson and Andy Doll. We all know Jeff as the DMNS Zoology Department’s Collections Manager and liaison to DFO. He is the guy who smiles when one hands him a dead, frozen bird bagged in plastic. Jeff has worked for the DMNS for 20+ years in many capacities. He has prepared study skins, dug fossils, and collected dung beetles. He knows the history and he knows the collection!

Our second leader is Andy Doll who is the Zoology Department’s new Ornithology Fellow. Andy was introduced to DFO at the January meeting between the hummingbirds and the gulls. Andy comes to the Museum from the University of Colorado where he is a graduate student studying Dunlin breeding in the North Slope region of Alaska. He has extensive experience working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Audubon Society, the Colorado Division of Wildlife, and SWCA Environmental Consultants on various bird-related projects. As the Ornithology Fellow he has already jumped in and is working on a number of projects in the ornithology collection such as ground truthing the Museum’s new bird database and developing ornithology related programming such as this indoor field trip for DFO.

Those of you who participated in the DMNS Zoology Department’s “Brain Teasers for Bird Brains” program last May will remember how much fun it was, how informative it was, and how challenging it was. Everyone who attended came away with new insights into the collections and knowing more about the birds we love chasing.

On March 28th bring your binoculars, your hand lenses, your thinking caps, your comfortable walking shoes and join Jeff and Andy in this fun indoor Museum field trip experience. The results won’t appear on eBird, but they will be memorable.

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15 p.m.; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30 P.M.** If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science.*

Future Programs

- April 25, 2011 - New ABA President
- No meeting in May, June, or July 2011— Enjoy our extensive offering of field trips..
- Next DFO Meeting is August 22, 2011

So Sayeth the Speaker....

DFO members are embarrassingly susceptible to oohing and aahing, but Monday night's monthly meeting with Paul Bannick's presentation was especially stimulatory. Bird photos taken with a 500-600mm 4.0 fixed lens are bound to be good, but his are unique, full of action and he has captured birds in surprising poses engaging with surprising prey. Adding to this set-up for success were his dramatic anecdotes about photographing western owls and woodpeckers, cold weather and water experiences that shamed many of us who tend to run home for the chili pot if our noses run too much. Mr. Bannick's approach to photography is to watch bird behavior until he understands how to insert himself into the bird's space without causing a disruption, and then to be patient, patient, patient until the bird returns. In the process, he has witnessed behaviors that add new information to the database about birds. Only some of his special tidbits are listed below:

- The complex and symbiotic relationship that owls and woodpeckers have with their habitats can be described as either *indicator* (presence of species reflects that habitat is healthy) or *keystone* (the birds change their habitat which makes it more inhabitable by other species).
- Flicker holes (2 ½ in) – preferred by >30 species including Northern Sawhet Owls, Elegant Trogans, Western Screech Owls, Northern Spotted Owl, Barred Owl.
- Rufous Hummingbird – depends on sap released by Red-breasted Sapsucker in early breeding season (March).
- Warblers and White-headed Woodpeckers are also attracted to sapsucker-drilled trees.
- Pileated Woodpecker holes are used by Wood Ducks, pine martins, swifts. After PWs introduce fungus into trees, weaker cavity-makers like Downy WPs are more successful.
- Hairy WP holes are enjoyed by Western Bluebirds and Northern Pigmy Owl.
- Goshawks hunt Pigmy Owls, but Pigmy Owls have a false face on the back of their heads which may give the hawks pause before striking.
- Pigmy Owls hunt chickadees and small prey, but our speaker has captured them bringing home green snakes, black-headed grosbeaks, and even a 15" Hoary Bat.
- Flammulated Owls (5 in) migrate from Central America in March and April when the weather is still cold. They have a natural antifreeze in their blood which helps protect them from freezing. They depend on moths that breed at the junction of Ponderosa and Douglas Fir stands. So, the presence of FOs "indicates" that this specific type of forest is healthy.
- Forest fires support old-growth tall trees by thinning out the competing small trees. These old-growth mature forests are needed by many woodpeckers and owls.
- Burned-forest areas attract Three-toed Woodpeckers which often arrive when the trees are still smoking. These WPs strip off patches of bark and eat wood-boring beetles, leaving large open patches on the trees which serve as feeding buffets for bluebirds and chickadees.
- Northern Hawk Owls have powerful eyes and prefer open landscapes and isolated perches. They like burn sites also, and use downed logs as runways when taking off.
- Boreal Owls prefer spruce forests which are close, crowded environments, so it's not surprising that they hunt more by hearing than vision. They have offset ears and radar-like discs on their faces that allow them to pinpoint prey with GPS accuracy.
- Mr. Bannick's Great Gray Owl pictures are stunning, demonstrating for us their beautiful wings that, despite the 5-ft span, are able to move with magical agility through the forest, hunting gophers and other prey. They use their feet to break through thick ice and snow while keeping their upper bodies perfectly still. They may nest in mistletoe bunches or reuse goshawk nests. Photos of fledgling GGOs trying to climb trees after falling out of the nest are precious.
- Oak habitats are used by Lewis WPs who catch insects on the wing, and by Acorn WPs who are communal breeders and create storage larders for nuts.
- Most Resplendent Quetzal reuse cavities started by Acorn Woodpeckers.
- Great Horned Owls will use cavities wherever they can find them, even in the banks of streams and on the sides of cliffs. They are aggressive hunters and even eat Long-eared and Barn Owls.
- Burrowing Owls live in burrows made by badgers, and may have 1-9 chicks
- Short-eared Owls have very little weight in their wings enabling them to hover over prey. They are big on aerial combat and emphasize their territorial claims by clapping their wings.
- The challenge of photographing the Snowy Owl required our speaker to stand for hours in waist-high snow while waiting for dawn's light. Waders are essential since the tundra is very soggy and he sank deep into very cold water. Females are larger than the pure white males, presumably because they must protect the nestlings. The males are more agile hunters because they are smaller. The Snowy Owl lays 1-12 eggs that hatch several days apart, perhaps because many hatchlings perish due to the cyclic and unreliable lemming population. Mr. Bannick described chicks running out of the nest into the tundra and then screaming to be fed.

DFO birders, addicted to the visual candy of bird sightings, went away satisfied and, well, high at the end of this magical evening, and maybe even a little smarter. Paul Bannick's stunning book of photos and commentary, *The Owl and the Woodpecker* is available from his website www.paulbannick.com.

Carol Blackard

Field Trip Summaries for January 2011

Saturday January 8

Longmont Area (LON)

Leader: Chris Owens. **Union Reservoir:** Observers: 7 Distance 3 miles by foot, Totals: 11 species, 680 individuals. **Jim Hamm Pond:** Observers: 7 Distance .05 miles by foot, Totals: 8 species, 24 individuals. **Dick's Bridge:** Observers: 7, Distance 8 miles, Totals: 17 species, individuals 772. **Road 20:** Observers 7 Distance, 14 miles, Totals: 14 species, 3145 individuals.

Sunday January 9

Wheatridge Greenbelt (WHE)

Leader(s): Toni Rautus. Observers: Marilyn Binkley, Dan Brachear, Jim Duggan, Don Mullineaux, Dick Prickett, Nina Routh, Paul Slingsby Time: 0900-1230. Distance: 3 miles on foot. Habitat: riparian and woods. Weather: snow. Totals: 38 species, 671 individuals.

Sunday January 15

88th and the Platte River (PLA)

Leader(s): Buzz Schaumberg. Observers: Mark Amershek, Mary Cay Burger, Joan Coxe, Ellie Doner, Donna Gilbert, Peggy Gonder, Ed Holub, Edmund Hruseik, Richard & Betty Mason, Karen von Saltza, Bill Suttner, Ashley Thompson. Time: Distance: 4 miles/ Weather: mid 40s. Totals: 32 species, 2064 individuals.

Saturday January 22

Belmar Historic Park (BEL)

Leader(s): Karleen Schofield. Observers: Paula Barnak, Karen Bellina, Joan Coxe, Rick Creswell, Wayne Haggerty, Lynne Majure, Patty O'Neill, Marjean Shafer, Barbara Shissler, Cindy Valentine Time: Distance:. Habitat: Riparian, lake, grassland. Weather: 32-40 ° Totals: 18 species, 442 individuals.

Sunday January 23

Cherry Creek State Park (CCK)

Leader(s): Mary Keither. Observers: Mark Amershek, Don Beltz, Patty Echelmeyer, Pauline Ide, Lois Levinson, Cynthia Madsen, Bob Razinski, Andy Spellman, Oliver Spellman, Karen van Saltza, Bill Wyerthele. Time: Distance; by car 9 miles, by foot 1.75. Habitat: Riparian, lake, grassland cottonwoods, willows. Weather: 25-46 ° mostly sunny, wind about 8mph from the west. Totals: 37 species, 2601 individuals.

Tuesday Birders

January 18

South Platte Park/Carson Nature Center (SOU)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. Observers: 33. Time: 0900-1300. Distance: 3 miles on foot. Habitat: Gravel ponds, riparian, cottonwood, willow, cattails, bicycle trail. elevation 5386'. Weather: Mostly sunny, 40-48°F, variable wind NNW 0-11 mph. Totals: 33 species 362 individuals.

January 25

Waterton Canyon (WAT)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. Observers: 33 Plains, Habitat: riparian, grassland, cottonwood, willow, with rock outcrops, elevation 5400'. Weather mostly sunny, 30-42 degrees F., southwest wind 0-8 mph. Time: 0800-11.30. Distance: 01 miles on foot. Habitat: Foothills, scrubland, riparian, elevation 6360'. Totals: 17 species, 76 individuals. Highlights: Sighted 24 Bighorn sheep.

Thank you for your donation to Educational Endowment Fund: Yvonne Parrott, Mary Katz, Lee & Linda Farrell

New Members: Welcome!

Kate Brannan & Paul Welschinger, 4030 Field Dr, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033, 303.421.1900
 Brian Hoffmann, 3276 W 96th Circle, Westminster, CO 80031, 303.953.0604
 Lucy & John James, 6464 S Downing St, Centennial, CO 80121-2518, 303.730.1545
 Carina Short, 6813 Big Horn Trl, Littleton, CO 80125, 720.981.3293
 Jenny Tallmadge, 7999 E 5th Ave, Denver, CO 80230-6490, 303.204.7974

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Charles Thornton-Kolbe, 2284 S Josephine Street, Denver CO 80210, 303.777.7588

Charles@pibird.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Lynn Willcockson, 2698 S Niagara, Denver CO 80224 303.757.7000

lynnliz2698@aol.com

TREASURER

Bob Shade, 9353 W Nevada Place, Lakewood CO 80226-3029, 303.975.2476

WRSHADE3@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Niña Routh (10) nrouth@copper.net

DIRECTORS

Alison Kondler (13) fieldbirder@msn.com

Rick and Connie Steinkamp (12)

ricconcal@comcast.net

John Drummond (12) jxdrummo@aol.com

Carol Blackard (11)

carol-blackard@comcast.net

Ira Sanders (11) greatauk@msn.com

Chris Blakeslee (10) chrisabla@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431

mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140

Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072

May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644

Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127

Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644

Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140

Oct-11 Volunteer Needed

Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127

Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson

rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21, Elizabeth, CO 8010. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532, veronicaholt@Q.com

Upcoming Field Trips

Jan, Apr, Jul, Oct: Scheduled by Patty Echelmeyer, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128 dacbcocook@comcast.net

Feb, May, Aug, Nov includes Spring count schedule, scheduled by Jackie King, compiled by Cris Cook, 8511 W Star Circle, Littleton, CO 80128, cris@pcsisys.net

Mar, Jun, Sep, Dec includes fall and Christmas count schedules, scheduled by Meredith Anderson meander303@mac.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421, email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email d_d_hill@comcast.net.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists](http://ColoradoFieldOrnithologists.com) Web Site.

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$ _____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

March 28, 2011
A Meeting/A Field Trip: Denver Museum of Nature and Science
A behind the scenes “look and see” unusual opportunity...



The Lark Bunting

MAY 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 5



May Field Trips

Sunday May 1

Gregory Canyon and Walden Ponds

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Sanders, 303-278-7172. Meet leaders at 06:30 at the parking lot for Chataqua Park, 900 Baseline. You will need a Boulder County Pass or plan to pay \$5-6. Lunch is optional as trip will probably be a half day. Group will meet then car pool to Gregory Canyon then on to Walden Ponds.

Saturday, May 7

McCabe Meadows Park (formerly Parker Regional Park)

Leader: Steve Kennedy 303-815-9738. Meet at 0730 for ½ day trip. From Main Street intersection in Parker, take Highway 83 south for 1.2 miles. Turn right on Indian Pipe Lane to the parking lot on the right. (The park is on the west side of the road) Wear your walking shoes – we'll go rain or shine. We may look into Triple C Ranch's marsh and pond. Surprises could be in store of us!

Sunday, May 8

Pawnee National Grasslands

Leader: Chuck Hundertmark, 303-604-0531 Meet leader at 07:30 at DOW, Division of Wildlife - 6060 No. Broadway – Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right. This will be an all day trip so bring lunch and drinking water. Please call or email leader at cahmark@q.com if you are planning to go. Should see a nice variety of plains and grasslands birds.

Saturday, May 14

Creative Ways to Learn Bird Sounds

Leader: Alison Kondler Time: 07:30 Phone: 303-973-3959 Meeting Place and Directions: Roxborough Visitor Center. Take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield S.P. to Waterton Rd. on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles). This 4 1/2 hour program will teach you how to hear bird sounds with your eyes by using personalized creative mnemonics (helpful ways to memorize).

Here are some examples of what to expect from this class: What to look for when observing a bird singing? * Listening for a small piece of a complicated song * Looking for physical attributes on the bird to match it to the sound * Creating a story about the bird to make its song unforgettable * Overlaying human songs onto birdsongs * Ways to visualize the song * And much more!

This class will start indoors with a presentation, then will head outside to listen and observe the birds on an easy walk (1 1/2 miles slow paced). Beginner to expert birders welcome! Bring binoculars, water and snacks. Please PRE-REGISTER by calling 303-973-3959. SPACE IS VERY LIMITED. Colorado State Parks Pass or Day Fee required. *Please arrive on time as a courtesy to the other participants.* Half Day Trip. About the leader: Alison's been a naturalist with Roxborough State Park since 1999. Bird sound interpretation is her specialty.

30th Annual Spring Bird Count – 2011

Everyone welcome – just show up. More eyes spot more birds. Scheduled by Hugh Kingery.

Thursday, May 12

Castlewood Canyon State Park

Leaders: Kirk & Kyle Huffstater (303-660-9298). Meet at 0630 at old entrance. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of

May Field Trips and 30th Annual Spring Bird Count.

Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance. State Parks pass required.

Friday, May 13 Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leader: Bob Brown (303-791-6204). Meet at 0630 at the Marina on west side (near Cherry Creek High School) in Cherry Creek State Park. State Parks pass required.

Saturday, May 14

Waterton, downstream. 4-5 mile hike. Wear long pants (not shorts) due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed.

Leader: Hugh Kingery, 303-814-2723. Meet at 0600 at Audubon Center/Discovery Pavilion (left turn immediately after turning from Wadsworth (Colo. 121) onto Waterton/Roxborough road (4.4 miles south of C470) and before the DOW parking lot for Waterton Canyon)

Barr Lake periphery

Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. Meet at 0730 on access road to entrance station at Barr Lake State Park. This trip does not involve much walking -- good for people with limited mobility or stamina.

Chatfield State Park

Leader, Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748.

Meet at 0600 at West (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks Pass required.

Lower Bear Creek

Leader: Mike Henwood (303-716-8551, cell 720-840-5070) <hawkhen@aol.com. Meet at 0600 at parking lot on Morrison Road at C470, northwest corner, next to the Conoco station.

Sunday, May 15

Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035

Call leader if you plan to go. Meet at 0600 at Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory. Exit I-76 at Bromley Lane; go east about ¼ mile and turn right (south) on Lark Bunting Lane, to end of road.

This is a ten-mile, all-day hike around the lake. State Parks pass required.

Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-814-2723. Trip full.

Saturday, May 21 Rigli Ranch

Leader: Joe Rigli, 970-768-7121. Meet leader at ranch by 0830. From Hudson, go east on CO 52 until it turns north. Don't turn north, but continue east on Morgan County road F to CR 14, then turn north for approximately one mile to first house on left by boxcars. Bring lunch and extra water.

Saturday May 28 to Monday May 30 Nebraska's Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Memorial Day Weekend. Leader: Mary Cay Burger, 303.771.3431 or mcburger3@juno.com Meet leader at Hudson, Colorado on Hwy 76 at 8:30am Saturday May 28. We will drive to Nebraska for lots of great birding. Possible other stops: Ash Hollow State Park, Wildcat Hills Rec Area, and Tamarack Ranch SWA. You will need to bring 3 lunches and 2 breakfasts and plan to eat two dinners in restaurants. Call or email leader for motel suggestions and carpooling information. Trip will return to Denver area by 6 pm on Monday May 31.

Monday May 30 (Memorial Day) 88th and South Platte Trail

Leader: Jackie King, 303-287-1644. Meet leader at 8:00 at the parking area at E. 88th and the South Platte River -- From I-76 take E. 88th Ave. exit, go west on 88th for 1.6 miles then turn south at Colorado Blvd. Turn left again into the parking lot for the South Platte River Greenway Trailhead. Explore along the river on the bike path which is paved and level. Leader uses a scooter for mobility so this trip will be accessible for those who use wheelchairs. RTD route #88 has a stop only about one block from there as well. Bring lunch and drinking water.

Scheduled by Jackie King

So Sayeth the Speaker....

The March 28, 2011, DFO meeting titled “A Meeting/A Field Trip: DMNS Behind the Scenes...” was a whopping success! Jeff Stephenson, DMNS Zoology Department’s Collections Manager and DFO liaison, Andy Doll, DMNS Zoology Department’s Ornithology Fellow, and Kathie Gully, DMNS’s Librarian, had laid out nine large tables full of specimen and artifacts from the Museum’s Zoological Collections and the Alfred M. Bailey Library and Archives. Ninety-five enthusiastic DFO members and guests, ranging in ages from 8 to 85, enjoyed the exhibits and the identification challenges presented. All this took place in the Rare Birds Hall on the Museum’s third floor against a backdrop of the amazing northern and extinct birds dioramas -- Tundra Swans, Emperor Geese, Harlequin Ducks, Carolina Parakeets, and Passenger Pigeons...

Andy Spellman e-mailed, “I just wanted to say thank you for the ‘Night at the Museum’. My boys loved it—good content, good socializing, and the right length too. I really appreciate it.”



The exhibits ranged from the Museum’s extremely rare, massive Elephant Bird egg to skeletons, study skins, bones, nests, books, photos, and computers. The Elephant Bird (Madagascar; extinct) egg is one of two in the Museum’s collection and is the largest egg ever laid by any animal in history, including dinosaurs. It was collected in the 17th Century and is one of fewer than 30 unbroken Elephant Bird eggs in existence. Next to this was the tiny nest of a hummingbird with its even tinier eggs. Continuing from table to table there was a large pelican skeleton followed by an extremely impressive array of large woodpeckers ranging from the Ivory-billed (extinct?), the larger Imperial Woodpecker (probably extinct), to the smaller Pileated Woodpecker, and ending with the “tiny” Red-headed Woodpecker.

There was a collection of six fully mounted skeletons (from an American Crow to a Flammulated Owl) which had to be matched to the appropriate study skin. I won’t tell you my score. Another

table contained a collection of labeled shorebird study skins, and a different collection of unlabeled shorebirds which participants had to try and identify with varying degrees of success. The last two tables contained wonderful books about Colorado birds from the Alfred M. Bailey Library, historical documents from Dr. Bailey’s scientific expeditions and from the Carter Collections, as well as a computer displaying a couple hundred photos from the Museum’s Image Archive which are now available online via LUNA on the Museum’s website. To access these go to www.dmns.org, click on Science, and then on Collections.

Those in attendance had the opportunity to see the Denver Museum of Nature and Science’s Ornithology collection on display. This collection consists of an ever expanding array of over 43,000 bird study skins and skeletons, 7,500+ egg sets, 1,200+ nests, and more. All these specimen are maintained in perpetuity in the Museum’s climate controlled environment for use by scientists, students, and artists. The oldest specimen on exhibit that night was collected in 1878 (don’t touch -- arsenic) and the newest, a crane from the Denver Zoo collected in 2010. We saw methods of preservation on display and learned that a hundred years ago scientists collected only a bird’s skin, while today the Museum collects skins, skeletons, bird parasites, and tissue samples (frozen at -85 degrees C) for future DNA study. 42,500 of the Museum’s specimen are catalogued and are accessible online through ARCTOS (www.dmns.org); give it a try. The Museum’s collection is one of the largest and most important in the Rocky Mountain Region.

I believe everyone in attendance came away with a greater appreciation and understanding of the Museum’s mission, the breadth of its collection, and the resources available to scientists and amateurs alike.

Submitted by Chris A. Blakeslee

Field Trip Summaries for February 2011

Sunday February 6 *Northeastern Colorado (NEC)*

Leader: Joey Kellner. : Mary Cay Burger, Sue Schulman, Tim Smart. Distance 220 by car. I-25 snowpacked, less snow further north. Totals: 52 species, 14,474 individuals. Raptors: 24 Northern harriers, 2 sharp-shinned, 9 red-tail, 2 ferruginous, 3 rough-legged, 1 golden eagle, 6 bald eagle, 20 kestrel, 4 merlin.

Saturday February 12 *Cherry Creek State Park (CCSP)*

Leader(s): Mary Cay Burger. Observers: 10. Time: 0900-1230. Distance: 1000 acres. Totals: 30 species, 1032 individuals.

Thursday February 17 *Cañon City and Environs (CC)*

Leader(s): Charles Thornton-Kolbe. *Turkey Creek Recreation Area:* Observers: 14 including Robert Parsons, Joan Larrabee, and John Drummond. Time: 7.40am, distance: 0.2m 14 species, 120 individuals. *Tunnel Drive:* time: 9.20 Distance 0.5m totals: 15 species, 63 individuals. *Riverwalk:* Time: 11.30am, distance: 1m, 22 species, 222 individuals Pine Warbler identified by John Drummond, data and photos to be submitted to Bird Records Committee. *Temple Canyon Park:* Time: 1.30pm, distance: 2m, 9 species, 64 individuals. Sage Thrasher seen and confirmed by 15 DFO birders.

Saturday February 26 *South Platte North from 88th (SPN/88)*

Leader(s): Paul Slingsby. Observers, Karen Bellina, Gwen Moore, Tom Bunker, Dick Prickett, Joan Coxe. Time: 4+ hours, distance: 3m, weather spring in February! 25-45 degrees. 25 species, 943 individuals.

Sunday February 27 *Bear Creek Drainage (BCD)*

Leaders(s) Mike Henwood, Michael Kiessig. Observers: Cheryl Chessick, Lou Levinson, Bruce and Christopher Neuman, Paul Banniuck, Audrey Bong. Weather 24-42 degrees, sunny to partly cloudy, 1 mile on foot. Highlights: Golden crowned sparrow and Curve-billed thrasher at the Red Rocks Feeder.

Tuesday Birders

Tuesday February 15 *South Platte River at 88th Avenue (PLA)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Mary Keithler, Lois Levinson. Observers: 34 (three groups). Time: 0900-1200. Distance: 4.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, cottonwood, willow, agricultural, bicycle trail, ponds, open water, elevation 5200'. Weather: Sunny, 44-67°F, south/sw wind, 0-5 mph. Totals: 34 species, 2843 individuals.

New Members: Welcome!

John Scott Alden, 6415 S Crocker St, Littleton, CO 80120, 303.380.5165
 Janice Arey, 5001 E 12th Ave, Denver, CO 80220, 303.377.6977
 Kathy Bollhoefer, 1150 Cook St, Denver CO 80206, 303.355.7569
 Charlie & Jean Curlee, 1141 Jersey St, Denver, CO 80220-4546, 303.331.4186
 Rachel & David Hutchison, 8445 Armadillo Trail, Evergreen, CO 80439-6227 303.679.1503
 Barbara & Doug Jones, 65 S Cody Ct, Lakewood, CO 80226, 720.220.1645
 Linda Kardos-Klug, 2270 S Zang Court, Lakewood, CO 80228-4365, 303.988.5756
 Norm Lewis, 852 S Deframe Way, Lakewood, CO 80228, 303.910.1629
 Christine Sibona, 226 W 2nd Ave, Denver, CO 80223, 303.722.0329
 Nancy Wesorick, 947 3rd St, Berthoud, CO 80513, 970.532.2194
 Fran & Lynn Yehle, 1235 Everett Ct, Lakewood, CO 80215, 303.237.0839

Thank you for your donation to the Education Fund: Fran & Lynn Yehle, Kathy Bollhoefer,

RMBO Summer Nature Camps

Summer bird camps offer outdoor fun and learning for ages 4 to 15

- *On the Wing*, for ages 13 to 15 will be July 11-16 at Camp Chief Ouray at Snow Mountain Ranch near Granby, Colo. Campers will design an outdoors research project and present their findings to U.S. Forest Service and RMBO staff. Outdoor recreation such as rafting, hiking, horseback riding and a ropes course will add to their appreciation of nature.
- *Young Ecologists* is a day camp for ages 11 to 13 from June 27 through July 1 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Campers will use investigation techniques to discover the secrets of Colorado habitats.
- *Young Naturalists*, ages 4 and 5, will gather every Tuesday in July from 9 to 11 a.m. to learn about nature through hands-on discovery crafts, games and hikes.
- *Nature Investigators*, ages 6 and 7, will enjoy hikes, scavenger hunts and games each Wednesday in July from 9 a.m. to noon, while they learn how habitats provide for animals' needs.
- *Habitat Explorers* meet Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. in July. These 8 to 10 year olds will explore habitats that make wonderful homes for Colorado wildlife.

Day camps are held at RMBO's Old Stone House at Barr Lake State Park near Brighton, Colo. Information on costs, registration and scholarships is available by contacting Cassy Bohnet at cassy.bohnet@rmbo.org or 303-659-4348 ext. 15. Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory is a Colorado-based, nonprofit organization working to conserve birds and their habitats from Montana into Mexico through science, education and stewardship.



Mandarin Duck on Prospect Park Lake
Photo by Will Burt.

DFO Monthly Meeting will resume in August.

Future Programs

- April 25, 2011 - New ABA President
- No meeting in May, June, or July 2011— Enjoy our extensive offering of field trips..
- Next DFO Meeting is August 22, 2011

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Charles Thornton-Kolbe, 2284 S Josephine Street, Denver CO 80210, 303.777.7588
Charles@pibird.com

VICE PRESIDENT

Lynn Willcockson, 2698 S Niagara, Denver CO 80224 303.757.7000
lynnliz2698@aol.com

TREASURER

Bob Shade, 9353 W Nevada Place, Lakewood CO 80226-3029, 303.975.2476
WRSHADE3@gmail.com

SECRETARY

Niña Routh (10) nrouth@copper.net

DIRECTORS

Alison Kondler (13) fieldbirder@msn.com
 Rick and Connie Steinkamp (12) ricconcal@comcast.net
 John Drummond (12) jxdrummo@aol.com
 Carol Blackard (11) carol-blackard@comcast.net
 Ira Sanders (11) greatauk@msn.com
 Chris Blakeslee (10) chrisabla@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler , 303.904.9140
 Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
 May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
 Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
 Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
 Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
 Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Oct-11 Volunteer Needed
 Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
 Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21, Elizabeth, CO 8010. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532, veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421, email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email d_d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$ _____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



30th Annual Spring Bird Count Thursday 12-15 May





Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

JUNE 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 6



June Field Trips

Saturday June 4 Pine/Bailey Areas

Leader: Chris Blakeslee, 303-694-4670. Meet leader in parking lot just south of Conoco station at Dartmouth and South Sheridan (S.W. corner across from old Bear Valley Shopping Center) at **0630**. **Alternative: meet the group at 0710** at the Pine Junction Country Store on the west side of Hwy. 285 at the stoplight in Pine Junction. Bring lunch and water for a fun filled day chasing mountain birds from Pine Valley Ranch to Wellington Lake and ending with the Bailey Heron Rookery. Bring clothing for changeable mountain weather.

Saturday June 5 Creative Ways to Learn Bird Sounds

Leader: Alison Kondler Time: **07:30AM** Phone: 303-973-3959 Meeting Place and Directions: Roxborough Visitor Center. Take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield S.P. to Waterton Rd. on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles). This 4 1/2 hour program will teach you how to hear bird sounds with your eyes by using personalized creative mnemonics (helpful ways to memorize).

Here are some examples of what to expect from this class: What to look for when observing a bird singing? * Listening for a small piece of a complicated song * Looking for physical attributes on the bird to match it to the sound * Creating a story about the bird to make its song unforgettable * Overlaying human songs onto birdsongs * Ways to visualize the song * And much more! This class will start indoors with a presentation, then will head outside to listen and observe the birds on an easy walk (1 1/2 miles slow paced). Beginner to expert birders welcome! Bring binoculars, water and snacks. Please PRE-REGISTER by calling 303-973-3959. SPACE IS VERY LIMITED. Colorado State Parks Pass or Day Fee required. *Please arrive on time as a courtesy to the other participants.* Half Day Trip. About the leader: Alison's been a naturalist with Roxborough State Park since 1999. Bird sound interpretation is her specialty.

Saturday June 11 Red Rocks Park

Leader: Tom Bush Meet the leader at Red Rocks Trading Post at 7.30am for a half day of foothills birding. Beautiful birds and beautiful scenery! Possible prairie falcons, white-throated swifts, warblers and many other foothills species. Bring lunch, water and scopes, if desired. This will be a half day trip. We'll end up watching the Trading Post feeders over lunch.

Sunday June 12 Belmar Park, Kountze Lake

(*This is a fully wheelchair accessible trip with pacing to match!)

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee, 303-694-4670 and Sue Schulman. Meet leaders at 7am in parking lot on the east side of Kountze Lake in Belmar Park behind the Iron Gate building. This site is near the Belmar Shopping Center at 800 S. Wadsworth Blvd. in Lakewood; turn west at light on West Ohio Avenue. Drive a short two blocks to the parking lot. We will be on paved trails and wooden decking and will bird around the lake and through the cat-tail marshes. Ducks, geese, swallows, night-heron, and warblers; bring snacks and water for this easy going half day of early summer birding.

June Field Trips, continued

Saturday June 18 Lair O' The Bear

Leader: Niña Routh 303-987-8687 - Looking to find some of the new birds in their nurseries. Expecting warblers, accipiters, and the usual (and maybe some unusual!) foothills birds. 40+ species possible. This is a half day trip. Bring snacks and water. Meet leader at 8am at Lair O' the Bear Park – from Morrison, drive 4 miles west on C-74 to park entrance on left. (Observe speed limits!) Please phone leader to register 303.987.8687; this trip is limited in number of participants.

Sunday June 19 Golden Gate Canyon State Park

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Sanders We'll be birding varied habitats (meadows, aspen groves, pine covered hills) between 7400' and 10,400'. Expecting numerous mountain and foothills species. Meet leaders at 7am at the Subway on the north side of Golden, 106 Rubey Dr #A. From intersection of US 6 and Hwy 93, go north approx 6/10 mile to first light at Iowa St. Turn east (rt) on Iowa. Go 1 block E and turn north (left) on Rubey Drive. Subway is just north of the Loaf-N-Jug. We will be carpooling from the Subway. Plan on birding into the afternoon. Bring lunch, State Parks pass if you have one.

Saturday June 25 Rigli Ranch

Leader: Joe Rigli, 970.768.7121. Full day trip. A treat to bird at this private ranch. Led by owner who has birded here since childhood. Prairie, riparian and woodlands habitats. Possible long-billed curlew, oriole sp, burrowing owls, raptors and prairie wildflowers. We will meet leader at ranch at 9am. From Hudson, go east on CO 52 until it turns north. Don't turn north, but continue east on Morgan County road F to CR 14, then turn north for approximately one mile to first house on left by boxcars. Bring lunch and extra water. Wear long pants.

Sunday June 26 Alfred M Bailey Bird Nesting Area

Leader: Toni Rautus 303.422.7322 A unique birding spot located in the Eagles Nest Wilderness Area at 9500' elevation. Many different habitats here so we will have a diversity and abundance of nesting birds. Meet leader at 7am at the Wendy's just north of Hwy 9 at the Silverthorne exit of I-70. Take exit 205 off I-70 and you will see the Wendy's immediately on the right. Bring lunch and water. We will be birding into the afternoon. If questions please call the leader.

Scheduled by Mary Geder

DFO Monthly Meeting will resume in August.

- No meeting in May, June, or July 2011— Enjoy our extensive offering of field trips..
- Next DFO Meeting is August 22, 2011

New Members: Welcome!

- Patti Galli, 15635 E Pine Drop Ave, Parker, CO 80134, 303.730.3812
- Chris Goulart & Jack Bellomo, 24127 E 5th Pl, Aurora, CO 80018
- Barb & John Haymond, 6569 E Phillips Pl, Centennial, CO 80112
- Barbara & Don Hollums, 6477 Wauconda Dr, Larkspur, CO 80118, 303.681.3144
- Marian McNamee & Keith Melichar, 2809 Eaton St, Wheat Ridge, CO 80214, 303.233.5733
- Robert Martinez & Kara Spitler, 930 Acoma St #208, Denver, CO 80204, 303.825.1190
- David Mendosa, 993 E Moorhead Cir. Apt 2F, Boulder, CO 80305, 303.499.5544

So Sayeth the Speaker....

What a fun and educational DFO presentation on 25 April 2011! Jeffrey A. Gordon, the new president of the American Birding Association (ABA) (<http://www.aba.org/>), and his wife Liz treated us to a rollicking “Jeopardy-style” program! For more information about Jeff’s impressive background as a writer, photographer, naturalist, and birding tour leader, see the DFO website (<http://www.dfobirders.org/>).

Prior to the Jeopardy-style quiz show, Jeff provided some interesting insights into the changing ABA under his leadership. He asked for a show of hands for those in the audience who are ABA members and was quite surprised and pleased that it appeared to be about 80% of the crowd (as viewed from my seat). He listed some of the new ABA initiatives.

- ☐ Staff members (and Liz as a volunteer) are tirelessly answering phones, responding to correspondence, and working hard to become a more accessible organization.
- ☐ A new ABA blog, which is updated multiple times daily, was introduced (<http://blog.aba.org/>) and provides interesting reading.
- ☐ They launched a new program called “Bird of the Year” and provided the 2011 stickers in the March issue of *Birding* (Vol. 43[2]). The stickers are the favorite “red and blue” American Kestrel, which is a bird of concern. The goal is for members to attach the stickers to their binoculars, etc., so ABA members can recognize each other in the field and to promote increased membership.
- ☐ ABA’s increased visibility on conservation issues includes recently partnering with the American Bird Conservancy (<http://www.abcbirds.org/>) on their new “Bird-Smart Wind Power” initiative. ABA will continue to partner with other conservation organizations.
- ☐ ABA will continue to serve its “bird lister” base and increasingly broaden membership clientele.
- ☐ Jeff understands the importance of partnering with “workers” in many birding organizations like the DFO.
- ☐ He stated that habitat conservation begins at the local level. So, it is important to increase the voice and visibility of the birding community and he is interested in hearing ideas from the members.
- ☐ Jeff said they will revamp ABA events by teaming with local organizations, e.g., an upcoming long October weekend in Half Moon Bay, California. They also are reinstating the ABA Ambassador Program with regional ambassadors.
- ☐ On 23 July 2011, ABA will host an open house and annual membership meeting at the ABA headquarters in Colorado Springs.

Jeff answered a few ABA-related questions from the audience including a question on how membership is doing. He replied that it has been decreasing for the past 10 years. In late 2010, the decrease slowed, and new memberships increased significantly in February and March 2011, which provides cautious optimism for future growth.

Jeopardy-Style Birding Quiz Show!

Now the fun show began! Jeff and Liz called on three people to volunteer as contestants for the quiz show! Bill Schmoker, Ira Sanders, and Chuck Hundertmark were willing to try their skills! Jeff provided buzzers and lights for the contestants, and his PowerPoint program was set up to mimic the Jeopardy categories, except that all the questions were related to birds! Mary Geder served as score keeper. Liz Gordon deftly held up flash cards at appropriate intervals for the audience to “Applaud,” “Scream,” “Laugh,” and provided winners with prizes!! If the contestants couldn’t answer the questions, an audience member was allowed to win a prize with a correct answer! Some of the questions were difficult! A few fun samples included:

- ~ Unique state birds = Brown Pelican, LA; Scissor-tailed Flycatcher, OK; California Gull, UT; Ruffed Grouse, PA; Cactus Wren, AZ
- ~ Scientific redundancy = *Anhinga anhinga*, Anhinga; *Histrionicus histrionicus*, Harlequin Duck; *Puffinus puffinus*, Manx Shearwater
- ~ What’s in a name = thrush, warbler, hawk: Swainson; hawk, sparrow: Harris; sandpiper, sparrow: Baird
- ~ Area, small to large = South Korea (1), Colorado (2), Cuba (3)
- ~ Weight of bird, small to large = Bushtit (1), Blue-gray Gnatcatcher (2), Blue-throated Hummingbird (3)
- ~ Splitsville = Winter Wren and Whip-poor-will; answer: Pacific and Winter Wrens, and Mexican and Eastern Whip-poor-wills

The scoring went back and forth among the contestants and the final winner was Bill Schmoker! All three were presented with prizes! The audience thoroughly enjoyed the fun and enlightening evening provided by Jeff and Liz Gordon!

Kay Niyo

Field Trip Summaries for March 2011

March 6 *Red Rocks/Conifer (RR)*

Leader: Mike Henwood. **Observers:** 8. **Distance** 62 car, 0.5 miles by foot. **Weather** warm and sunny early, partly cloudy later in the day 30-55°. **Totals:** 32 species, 257 individuals. **Highlights** at the Conifer Mountain feeders included 50 Grey-crowned Rosy-Finch, 25 Black Rosy-finch, 15 Brown-capped Rosy-Finch.

March 12 *88th and South Platte (88/SP)*

Leader(s): Joanna Chan, Chishun Kwong. **Observers:** 8. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** riparian. **Weather:** sunny 60° calm. **Totals:** 32 species, 571 individuals.

March 19 *South Platte Park (Mineral to C-470) (SPPK)*

Leader(s): Richard Anderson. **Observers:** 6. 8am-12noon. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Riparian, river, open water. **Weather:** 35-65° wind ESE at 3.2mph. **Totals:** 33 species, 233 individuals.

March 20 *Morgan County (MOR)*

Leader(s): Norm Erthal. **Observers:** 6. **Distance;** by car 200 miles, by foot 2 miles. **Habitat:** Reservoirs, ponds, riparian, farmland, grassland. **Weather:** 34-64 ° **Totals:** 59 species, 2789 individuals.

March 22 *Fountain Creek Regional Park (FCA)*

Leader(s): Ken Pals. **Observers:** DFO, Tuesday birders, Aiken Audubon and others. **Time:** 8.30-11.30am. **Distance,** 2.5 miles on foot. **Habitat:** Plains, riparian, wetlands. **Weather:** partly cloudy 50° wind WNW 5-10mph. **Totals:** 43 species, 222 individuals. **Highlights,** Winter Wren (Eastern), Harris Sparrow, Golden Eagle, Yellow-rumped Warbler.

March 22 *Big Johnson Reservoir (BJR)*

Leader(s): Ken Pals. **Observers:** DFO, Tuesday birders, Aiken Audubon and others. **Time:** 12.30 – 1.15pm. **Habitat:** Aquatic, plains. **Weather:** partly cloudy 50° calm. **Totals:** 21 species, 261 individuals.

March 26 *Northwest Metro Lakes (NML)*

Leader(s): Chuck Lowrie. **Observers:** 12. **Time:** 0900-1230. **Distance:** 2 miles on foot. **Habitat:** riparian. **Weather:** clear 40-50°. **Totals:** 44 species, 644 individuals. **Highlights:** Mandarin Duck, Barrow's Goldeneye.

Tuesday Birders

March 1 *Cherry Creek State Park (CCSP)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 29. **Time:** 0900-1300. **Distance:** 2.5 miles. **Habitat:** Lake, riparian/cottonwood, wetlands, grasslands, elevation 5550'. **Weather:** Mostly sunny, 44-62°F, wind SE 0-3mph. **Totals:** 34 species 2168 individuals.

March 15 *Barr Lake State Park (BAR)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell and Barbara Fay. **Observers:** 33 (two groups) Lake, prairie, reservoir, riparian, cottonwood, willow, cattails, agriculture, elevation 5100'. **Weather** cloudy, breezy, 39-47° SW wind 6-9mph. **Totals:** 40 species, 4944 individuals.

March 22 *Belmar Historic Park (BEL)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 10 Riparian, grassland, wetland, man-made ponds elevation 5400'. **Cloudy to sunny** 48-50° NW wind 5-12mph. **Totals:** 19 species, 4940 individuals.

March 29 *Denver Botanic Gardens at Chatfield (DBG)*

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. **Observers:** 33 **Habitat,** ponds, cottonwood, willow, cattails, open fields. **Elevation** 5500'. **Weather** partly sunny 39-50° wind variable 0-10. **Totals:** 31 species, 190 individuals

RMBO Summer Nature Camps

Summer bird camps offer outdoor fun and learning for ages 4 to 15

- *On the Wing*, for ages 13 to 15 will be July 11-16 at Camp Chief Ouray at Snow Mountain Ranch near Granby, Colo. Campers will design an outdoors research project and present their findings to U.S. Forest Service and RMBO staff. Outdoor recreation such as rafting, hiking, horseback riding and a ropes course will add to their appreciation of nature.
- *Young Ecologists* is a day camp for ages 11 to 13 from June 27 through July 1 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Campers will use investigation techniques to discover the secrets of Colorado habitats.
- *Young Naturalists*, ages 4 and 5, will gather every Tuesday in July from 9 to 11 a.m. to learn about nature through hands-on discovery crafts, games and hikes.
- *Nature Investigators*, ages 6 and 7, will enjoy hikes, scavenger hunts and games each Wednesday in July from 9 a.m. to noon, while they learn how habitats provide for animals' needs.
- *Habitat Explorers* meet Thursdays from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. in July. These 8 to 10 year olds will explore habitats that make wonderful homes for Colorado wildlife.

Day camps are held at RMBO's Old Stone House at Barr Lake State Park near Brighton, Colo. Information on costs, registration and scholarships is available by contacting Cassy Bohnet at cassy.bohnet@rmbo.org or 303-659-4348 ext. 15. Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory is a Colorado-based, nonprofit organization working to conserve birds and their habitats from Montana into Mexico through science, education and stewardship.



April 27, 2011

As members of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology's Team Sapsucker, we'd like to thank everyone for the amazing show of support during our Big Day efforts to raise funds for bird conservation. Our total for the day was 264 bird species, three higher than the previous U.S. record for most birds seen on a Big Day! Thanks to the generosity of friends and members of the Cornell Lab, we raised nearly \$200,000 for bird conservation programs. If you made a donation, thank you! If you haven't yet made a contribution, you can still do so at www.birds.cornell.edu/bigdaygift.

Our Big Day quest began on Friday with a Yellow-crowned Night-Heron and Barred Owl spotted in the glow of park lights near San Antonio's famous Riverwalk—followed by a calling Common Pauraque, a tropical relative of the Whip-poor-will. In the first frantic moments of daylight in Uvalde we noted both a Blue Jay and Green Jay as well as the slow melodious song of an Audubon's Oriole. From there we went to the Hill Country near Neal's Lodges where Golden-cheeked Warblers and Hutton's Vireos sang from the hillside, a Scott's Oriole flew overhead, and a Spotted Towhee scratched on the ground. Heading back through San Antonio after the morning rush-hour we scored a Monk Parakeet at a nest along the Interstate.

In the afternoon, a promising kettle of raptors turned up a Swallow-tailed Kite soaring far above Swainson's Hawks and Mississippi Kites, and a huge migrating flock of some 400 American White Pelicans. The woodpeckers in Victoria were wonderful—Downy, Red-bellied, and a nesting Pileated. The rice fields produced Glossy Ibis, American Golden-Plover, and Buff-breasted Sandpiper. Sunset near Corpus Christi brought only a handful of migrant warblers, but enough to pull us near the record. As the sun set, Northern Bobwhite called while Clapper Rail grunted from the marshes. In darkness, the calls of Virginia and Black rails signaled our final birds to end the day at the new high-water mark of 264.

It was a memorable 24 hours, not only for the spectacular diversity of birds we experienced in such a short amount of time, but for the inspiring support of all who contributed to advance bird conservation. Next up: best wishes to our student team, the Redheads (named for the Cornell "Big Red"). They will compete in New Jersey's World Series of Birding on May 14 to raise funds for undergraduate research!

Sincerely, Chris Wood (captain), Jessie Barry, Andrew Farnsworth, Marshall Iliff, Tim Lenz, Brian Sullivan

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Chuck Hundertmark, 2546 Lake Meadow Dr.
Lafayette, CO 80026 cahmark@Q.com
303.604.0531

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Shade, 13861 W Dakota Ave, Lakewood,
CO 80228 wrshade3@gmail.com 303.975.2476

TREASURER

Mary Geder, 13831 W Harvard Dr. Lakewood,
CO 80228 mfg5000@live.com 303.986.6127

SECRETARY

Newell Grant, 1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood
Village, CO 80121 nmgrantstr@aol.com
303.761.9967

DIRECTORS

Chris Blakeslee (2013) chrisabla@aol.com
John Drummond (2012) jxdrummo@aol.com
Tina Jones (2014) tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2014) kay@kayniyo.com
Ira Sanders (2014) greatauk@msn.com
Connie Steinkamp (2012) ricconcal@comcast.net
Lynn Willcockson (2014) lynnliz2698@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place,
Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Oct-11 Volunteer Needed
Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21,
Elizabeth, CO 8010. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532,
veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421,
email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact
person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email
d_d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750
Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor
Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com
Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$ _____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

JULY 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 7



July Field Trips

Saturday July 2- to Monday July 4

North Park-- Joint Trip With BBC

Leader: Chuck Lowrie, (303) 455-8417.

Meet at Safeway parking lot on east side of U.S. 40 in Fraser at 0900 on Saturday morning. (Fraser is a 2 hour drive from Denver.) Make reservations for Saturday & Sunday nights in Walden at the North Park Inn, 970-723-4271, or the Chedsey Motel, 970-723-8201. A State Parks Pass is required. Call Patty Echelmeyer, 303-233-4947, for information and registration before June 23rd or Chuck from the 23rd on. We will arrange carpooling from Denver and Boulder. Bring water, snacks, lunches, insect repellent and clothing for variable weather.

Thursday July 7

Genesee Park

Leader: Kathanne Lynch, 303-968-4750

Meet at 0800 Genesee Exit #254 Genesee (RTD lot on Mt. Vernon/ north side). On this weekday morning trip, we explore the traditional bird stops in Genesee Park on the south side of I-70. This trip is for beginner birders, and for experienced birders who want to revisit the summer birds and the park. Species with young may include Williamson Sapsucker, Violet-green Swallow, Western Bluebird and House Wren. Summer migrants will likely include Broad-tailed Hummingbird, Cordilleran Flycatcher, Western Tanager, Yellow-rumped (Audubon's) Warbler, Chipping Sparrow, Tree Swallow, Mountain Bluebird, Hermit Thrush, Black-headed Grosbeak and Lesser Goldfinch. Likely resident species are Red-tailed Hawk, Hairy Woodpecker, Steller's Jay, Mountain Chickadee, all three Nuthatches, Dark-eyed Junco, and Pine Siskin.

Please wear sturdy shoes; sneakers are okay if you stay on the gravel road. We will walk primarily on gravel trails or roads with elevation changes of less than 100 feet at any one site. You also have the option to stand near the cars at the 4-5 stops we will make. Bring water, sunscreen, a hat and a snack. This trip will end at about 11:30.

Saturday, July 9

Rocky Mountain National Park

Leader: Bob Righter. 303-692-8529

Meet at 0800 at the Park Visitor's Center, east of Beaver Meadows entrance on U.S. highway 36. Three quarter's day trip. Bring lunch and clothes for changeable weather. Either you need a parks pass or ride with someone who has one, or be prepared to pay entry fee. Possible birds are Mountain Bluebirds, Golden Crowned Kinglet, Williamson's Sapsucker, Lincoln Sparrow and HOPEFULLY ptarmigan.

Sunday, July 10th

Birding by Ear ~ In the Field - Lair o'the Bear

Leader: Alison Kondler, 303-904-9140

Meet at 0730 at Lair o'the Bear parking lot. From Morrison & C-470, drive 4 miles west on C-74 to park entrance on left. We'll be listening to and observing mountain birds. Learning many unique mnemonic techniques in the field to help you memorize and attach the sound back to the specific bird. Beginner to expert birders welcome! Bring binoculars, water and snacks. Please PRE-REGISTER at the number above. SPACE IS LIMITED. About a half day trip.

Continued on next page

July Field Trips, continued

Saturday, July 16

Woodpecker Trip - Sedalia to Cheesman

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee, 303-694-4670 and Kirk Huffstater. **Limit of 15 birders; must make a reservation.**

Meet leaders in parking lot of Sedalia Post Office at 0600. Take Hwy. 85 to Sedalia; turn southwest on Hwy. 67, drive through Sedalia over two major sets of railroad tracks. The U.S. Post Office is on the northwest (right) side of Hwy. 67. Group will carpool from here. Bring lunch and water for a fun filled day chasing woodpeckers and any other mountain birds that may cross our paths. Bring clothing for changeable mountain weather. Full day trip. We will target 8 woodpecker species including N. Three-toed, Lewis's, and Red-headed Woodpeckers. Finding the Lewis's and Red-headed Woodpeckers will involve fording a creek (no bridge), climbing steep hillsides, and climbing over downed trees at 7000+ feet elevation in the Hayman Burn area. You need to be in good shape for this rigorous 2-3 mile hike!

Sunday, July 17

Rocky Mountain National Park

Leader: Norm Erthal 303-917-2596

Meet at 0700 at the Division of Wildlife parking lot at 6060 N. Broadway. From I-25 take exit for 58th Ave., go west 2 blocks to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to the parking lot of your right. We will arrange carpool and specific spots based on where birds have been recently found. Group will bird until mid-afternoon. Wear boots and bring lunch.

Saturday, July 23

Wilderness on Wheels

(*This is a fully wheelchair accessible trip with pacing to match!)

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee, 303-694-4670 and Niña Routh, 303-987-8687.

Meet leaders at 0900 at Wilderness on Wheels, Grant, Colorado. Wilderness on Wheels is located 2½ miles west of Grant on the south side of Hwy. 285 at the foot of Kenosha Pass. There is a big sign. Wilderness has a 1-mile boardwalk through riparian and spruce/fur habitats, including active beaver ponds. This boardwalk was built for wheelchair accessibility. The group will also visit the tiny Bailey Great Blue Heron Rookery. Bring snacks and water for this easy-going half day of mid-summer birding.

Sunday, July 24

Golden Gate Canyon Park

Leader: Randy Lentz 303-680-3381.

Meet at 0730. at Park Visitor center, just west of C-93, north of Golden Gate's various habitats attract a wide diversity of birdlife. Main group will bird until lunch. Birding after lunch optional based on weather.

Saturday, July 30

Mount Evans

Leader: Bob Shade, 303-975-2476.

Meet at 0800 at Filius Park. Go west on I-70 to Evergreen exit, then to first Bergen Park turn off and go right to Filius Park. From there we will consolidate cars to drive up to Echo Lake and Summit Lakes. Bring lunch and clothes for all kinds of weather. (We may go as high as 14,000 feet.) Chance to see high mountain birds including Pine Grosbeaks, Wilson Warblers and hummingbirds. Also, may see a variety of mammals. Will bird until about mid-afternoon.

Scheduled by Jill Boice



New members: Welcome and add to your roster.

- ~ Miriam Brandt, 14164 W Warren Circ, Lakewood, CO 80228, 720.587.5797
- ~ Paul Denholm & Susan Crisfield, 10785 W 36th Ave, Wheat Ridge, CO 80033, 303.384.9051
- ~ Greg Lengsfeld & Kathy Hamilton, 6191 S Salida Ct, Aurora, CO 80016, 303.204.0297
- ~ JoAnn Pettinicchio, 12905 Falls Rd, Cockeysville, MD 21030, 410.561.0345
- ~ **And Welcome Back**, Robert Zilly, 2460 Tulip St, Longmont, CO 80501, 303.532.9931.

A Cautionary Tale...

Chuck Hundertmark, President

On Saturday, June 4, a beautiful Colorado day when we all should have been in the field birding, veteran DFO leader Chris Blakeslee led his annual Pine/Bailey excursion. A group of 14 joined Chris to pursue mountain birds and check out nesting herons. By Chris's account, it was a good trip with "some good birds."

"A Virginia's Warbler was the most unusual bird," Chris reported. Other highlights included a female Common Merganser with 12 little ducklings at Pine Valley Ranch; 2 Western Grebes and 3 Ring-billed Gulls (new for Wellington Lake); dozens of Common Mergansers (more than usual); and Great Blue Heron nestlings in Bailey.

The excitement of the day with mountain birds turned sour, however, when the party returned to their meeting place where they had left four vehicles. The vehicles had been left in the parking lot of a vacant store at Dartmouth and Sheridan that had often been used by field trips in the past. This time, the vehicles of four birders were gone. The party then noticed "No Parking" signs that appeared to be somewhat new. After some sleuthing, they found that the vehicles had been towed to an impound lot by Skyline Recovery Systems. The owners were required to cough up \$307 each to recover their vehicles and had to do so in cash.

I call this a cautionary tale because it has lessons for all of us, trip leaders and participants alike. First, we may need to rethink some of our favorite spots for leaving vehicles. Carpooling remains the most economical and environmental sound practice for our field trips. Lynn Willcockson suggests sticking with Park-n-Rides, active shopping centers or public parks. I would add, or other public parking places.

We have found out that owners of private property can have any vehicle towed from their property if it was parked there without permission. And the property doesn't even have to be posted.

The DFO board will be looking at the guidelines for trip leaders to determine whether we need more specific instructions about meeting places. In the meantime, I'd like to ask trip leaders to be sure that any place vehicles are to be left allows public parking. In some cases, this may mean selecting a new meeting place.

However, as we look forward to making every effort that this doesn't happen in the future, this does not change the precept that the responsibility for safe and lawful conduct on DFO field trips does not lie exclusively with the trip leader. All participants in DFO field trips are asked to sign an agreement and waiver. Item 5 of the agreement states that the participant will "Observe all applicable rules of conduct, policy, regulation and law, whether on public or private lands". While the DFO trip leader will do their best to make the field trip an enjoyable experience, it is everyone's responsibility to try ensure an enjoyable trip. Everyone must have input to accomplish this as DFO is not a military organization in which leaders give orders and trip participants follow them. (Many of us are far too ornery for that.) Rather, we are individuals who come together to share knowledge and appreciation of birds.

On a well-run field trip, participants are all calling out new birds and discussing difficult identifications. The person who points out the field marks on a Caspian Tern might not be the trip leader. It might be the participant who just returned from the Texas coast where she saw a dozen of the terns up close.

In the same way, the trip leader is not the only participant responsible for making sure the field trip party is respecting laws and property rights. If members of the party are about to enter posted property, the person who notices the "No Trespassing" sign is responsible for pointing it out.

Our volunteer field trip leaders put a lot of effort and thought into planning and organizing trips to give participants a great birding experience. It's a challenging job, however, and we all benefit when participants share responsibility for making the trip successful.

Continued on page 5

Field Trip Summaries for April 2011

Saturday, April 2 *Cherry Creek State Park (CCSP)*

Leader: Bob Brown. **Observers:** 16—Mark Amershek, Tom Bunker, Jacques Chartier, Georgia Dorr, Jean Girard, Linda Henry, Carol and Jim Larson, Nancy Osborn, Ted Pinkert, Sharon Pfeiffer, Joe Roller, Tom Schlosser, Andy Spellman, Melissa Smith, David Weimer. **Habitat,** mixed riparian, open water. **Distance** 14.5 car, 3.5 miles by foot. **Weather** partly cloudy early, mostly sunny later in the day 55-75°. **Totals:** 38 species, 299 individuals

Saturday, April 9 *Star K Ranch (SKR)*

Leader Anne Bonnell. **24 species.** Details are available on eBird.

Sunday, April 10 *McCabe Meadows (McC)*

Leader Sue Schulman. **Habitat** riparian, fields and ponds. **Elevation** 5850 ft. **Temperature** 37-52°, **NW wind** 28-32mph., **30 species,** 224 individuals.

Saturday, April 16 *South Mesa Trail (SMT)*

Leader Paula Hansley, **Observers,** Jim Petri, Chris Owens, Clinton Flynn, Caro (?) Flynn, Mary Metzger, Mardia Millhau, Midge (no last name) Dianna Johnston, Roni Wilson, Becky Eeds. **Habitat,** foothills riparian, shrub, ponderosa forest. **Distance** 3 car, 3 on foot. **Partly cloudy,** 45-65° **NW wind,** blustery. **24 species,** 64 individuals.

Wednesday, April 20 *Chatfield Reservoir (CSP)*

Leader Bob Shade. **Observers** Bob Knapp and Joe Roller. **Habitats** lake, riparian, march grassland, 2 miles by car, 3 on foot. **Weather** cloudy, 34-44° **Highlights** 10 Bonaparte's Gulls, and good comparisons with Franklin's Forster's Terns, one late Bald Eagle. **46 species,** 850 individuals.

Thursday, April 28 *Birding Castle Rock and other South Metro Areas*

Leaders: Charles Thornton-Kolbe and Kirk Huffstater. **Douglas County.** **Elevation** ranged from 4,500 to 7,500 feet. **We travelled** 40 miles by car and about 1.5 miles on foot. **Temperature** 50s and into 60s, **wind** minimal for most of the day with some gusts mostly toward end of day. **Observers:** Patty Echelmeyer, Charles Walters, June Goodwin, Jim Hansman (of Castlewood Museum), Wilma Vocke, Frank Lehto, Val Denny, and Len and Mary Harcourt.

In conjunction with the Castlewood Museum, eleven birders enjoyed great birding spots in the general Castlewood Canyon Area. We stopped at both the Walker Gravel Pit near Franktown, and we birded Castlewood Canyon State Park. We started birding at about 8am near the Museum (which produced Lesser Goldfinch) for the early arriving Kirk Huffstater. We spent the first few hours around Walker Gravel Pit, and hiked a nearby trail adding Great Horned Owl, House Wren and more. Before leaving, we had over 55 species there. A number of folks on the trip added life birds, with nice species such as Marbled Godwit, both yellowlegs, and numerous Eared Grebes.

Kirk also showed us the best way to bird Castlewood Canyon, where we saw a nice flock of Chipping Sparrows, Vesper Sparrows (smaller group), 3 jay species, and White-throated Swifts. Some in the group got on a Loggerhead Shrike (1 individual) and American Kestrel (several), but mostly only folks in lead car. Later in the day we tried for Three-toed Woodpecker and Lewis's Woodpecker, but these two reliable spots were devoid of activity in the late afternoon. We did add a flyover Double-crested Cormorant (1), Common Raven (1) and Horned Lark and a few nice butterflies. In total, we tallied 68 species.

Saturday, April 23 *Longmont Area*

Leader Chris Owens, **area included** Jim Hamm Pond, where it was snowing—30 species including a Great-tailed Grackle and 12 White-faced Ibis. **119 Gravel Ponds,** no report of snow, **27 species.** **Road 20—10 species.** **Union Reservoir,** Virginia Rails were heard, **Yellow-headed Blackbirds** were perched in a small tree near the marsh edge, **29 species.** **Dick's Bridge,** 13 species. **Sanborn Reservoir** 14 species.

Continued on next page

Field Trip Summaries for April 2011, continued

Sunday, April 24 *Fountain Creek Regional Park*

Leader Paul Slingsby, Observers, Jim Duggan, Lynne Miller, Bruce Newman, Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, Rick Steincamp, Connie Steincamp, Karen von Saltza. Fountain Creek Regional Park, a cold (low 30s) humid day with no significant precipitation. The Harris's Sparrows were seen and agreed to by all 9 of our group. One was in breeding plumage. Species 42. A Big Johnson Reservoir Highlight: We were almost shocked at the number of birds and the variety of species at Big Johnson Reservoir., especially the large number of Willets and Marbled Godwits. A Fountain Creek Regional Park Highlight: A photographer we met showed us the Great-horned Owl nest which had 2 young in grey down. Two Harris's Sparrows were also a big event.

Saturday, April 30 *Rocky Mountain Arsenal*

Leader Dave Rhoades, observers Don Beltz, Derek Hankins, Peggy Hankins, Linda Knudson, Walter Knudsen, Jo Anne Marshall, David Mendesen, Kiki Widiaje,. 7 miles by car, 0.5 on foot. Weather clear and strong wind. Highlights: nesting Swainson's Hawk, Red-tailed Hawk, Bald Eagle, Great Horned Owl Savannah Sparrow. 61 species, 485 individuals.

To see individual bird tallies, details are on E-Bird, and in an excel spreadsheet on www.dfobirders.org.

Bill Schmoker to launch the next series of DFO meeting presentations....

August 22, 7:30pm

Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Science and Nature

One of our favorite speakers, Bill Schmoker, will be speaking on his long research trip as a member of the PolarTREK team last year. The purpose was more than bird photography, but Bill will no doubt have plenty of his splendid bird photos for us.

Bill hardly needs introduction to DFO members, but in case you are new, or have been behind a rock somewhere, you need to know that:

- * Bill has photographed over 600 species of North American birds and no doubt added to that when he led a recent Partnership for International Birding in North Dakota and Minnesota's boreal forest.
- * His photos appear internationally in numerous books, magazines, web sites, and interpretive signage.
- * His day job is teaching Earth Science at Centennial Middle School in Boulder so that makes him just right for us.

Check out his blog and website photos at <http://www.schmoker.org>.

More information about his presentation in the August issue and on the web site dfobirders.org

A Cautionary Tale, continued from page 3

None of this is meant to place blame for the towed vehicle incident. It was an unfortunate incident from which we all must learn. That particular location had been used as a meeting place for many trips, so there was no reason to anticipate a change. All participants need to be mindful of the location where they will be leaving their cars in spite of the occasional chaos that may occur at the start of a field trip. So, looking to the future, we should reassess any of our traditional meeting places that aren't clearly public parking places.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Chuck Hundertmark,
2546 Lake Meadow Dr. Lafayette, CO 80026
cahmark@Q.com 303.604.0531

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Shade,
13861 W Dakota Ave, Lakewood, CO 80228
wrshade3@gmail.com 303.975.2476

TREASURER

Mary Geder,
13831 W Harvard Dr. Lakewood, CO 80228
mfg5000@live.com 303.986.6127

SECRETARY

Newell Grant,
1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood Village, CO
80121 nmgrantsr@aol.com 303.761.9967

DIRECTORS

Chris Blakeslee (2013) chrisabla@aol.com
John Drummond (2012) jxdrummo@aol.com
Tina Jones (2014) tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2014) kay@kayniyo.com
Ira Sanders (2014) greatauk@msn.com
Connie Steinkamp (2012) ricconcal@comcast.net
Lynn Willcockson (2014) lynnliz2698@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place,
Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler , 303.904.9140
Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Oct-11 Chris Owens christieowens2@me.com
Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21,
Elizabeth, CO 80107. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532,
veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421,
email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact
person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email
d_d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st. If more convenient, you can pay for more than one year, just make sure you make a note of that when you submit your payment.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic (legible) *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

AUGUST 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 8

The 5-week Arctic Pelagic with Bill Schmoker



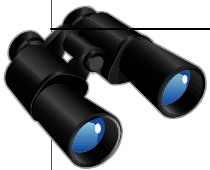
The DFO Feature Presentations resume on Monday August 22 with an icy blast!

Join Bill for a talk about his experiences (birding and otherwise) aboard an icebreaker last summer in the Arctic Ocean. Bill spent five weeks at sea aboard the US Coast Guard Cutter Healy, a 420-foot icebreaker, as a PolarTREC teacher assigned to the Canada-US joint expedition surveying the extended continental shelf north of both countries.

The cruise reached a latitudinal high point of 82.5°N, 139° W (over 800 miles north of Pt. Barrow, AK.) Over the course of the trip many interesting birds, other wildlife, and high arctic phenomena were encountered, and Bill will recount these along with

other interesting aspects of the cruise. For a preview check out <http://www.polartrec.com/expeditions/international-continental-shelf-survey>.

More information on upcoming meetings on page 3



August Field Trips

Saturday, August 6

Central South Platte River

Leader: Jackie King, 720-381-3314. Meet leader at 0700 at Parking Lot W at 4th and Walnut St on the Auraria Campus. Will walk along the greenbelt and see what birds are living in the heart of downtown Denver. Bring drinking water and snacks for a half day trip. Leader uses a scooter for mobility so the trip will be accessible. Parking costs \$2 for all day. From I-25 take Speer Blvd. South to Auraria Parkway then turn right to 7th St. At 7th St. turn left one block to Walnut. Turn right on Walnut and continue to 4th and you will see the parking lot on the South side of the street. Please call leader if going. Meeting place is very near to the Light Rail Station close to Elitch's Garden.

Sunday, August 7

Rocky Mountain National Park

Leader: Ed Holub, 303-979-2194. Meet leader at 0800 at the Visitor Center (Park Headquarters) just this side of the Beaver Meadows entrance to the park. This will be an all day trip so bring lunch, extra water and sufficient clothing for a change in weather. Trip will probably finish by 3pm or so. Parks Pass or fee is required to enter the park by vehicle.

Saturday, August 13

Lair o'the Bear and Corvina Park

Leaders: Tammy and Ira Sanders, 303-278-7172. Meet leaders at 0700 at Lair o'the Bear for a probably half-day

Continued on next page

August Field Trips, continued

trip. From Morrison, drive 4 miles west on C-74 to park entrance on left. (Observe speed limits!) Bring lunch if you want for after the trip but be sure to bring drinking water and snacks. No parks pass required for this trip.

Sunday, August 14 Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035. Meet leader at 0700 at the Nature Center in the Park. From Denver, take East I-76 to Bromley Lane, Exit 22. Go east on Bromley Lane to Piccadilly Road, then turn south for approx. 2 miles to park entrance. Trip will probably be a half day trip so lunch is optional but do bring drinking water and snacks. State Parks Pass or fee is required to enter the park.

Saturday, August 20, 2011 Cherry Creek State Park

*(*this is a fully wheelchair accessible trip with pacing to match!)*

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee, 303-694-4670, and Mary Cay Burger, 303-771-3431. Meet leaders at 0700 in the Marina parking lot near the park's west entrance. From Yosemite drive east on Union Avenue. Just past Cherry Creek High School is the west side park entrance. State Parks pass required. We will be on paved or hard gravel trails in various locations around the reservoir. Ducks, geese, swallows, night-heron, and warblers; bring snacks, sunscreen, and water for this easy going half-day of late summer birding.

Sunday, August 21 Roxborough State Park

Leader: Doris Cruze, 303-798-8072. Meet leader at 0730 at Roxborough Visitor Center. To reach the park, take S. Wadsworth Blvd. past Chatfield S.P. to Waterton Rd. on left. Take Waterton Rd. 1.6 miles east to North Rampart Range Rd., turn right and go south 2.3 miles to Roxborough Park Rd. Turn left and follow signs to the park (2.2 miles). Trip will end around 11:30 so lunch is optional but bring plenty of water. There is a nice place to enjoy lunch at the Visitor Center. State Parks pass required.

Saturday, August 27 Rigli Ranch

Leader: Joe Rigli, 970-768-7121. Meet leader at ranch by 0830. From Hudson, go east on CO 52 until it turns north. Don't turn north, but continue east on Morgan County road F to CR 14, then turn north for approximately one mile to first house on left by boxcars. Bring lunch and extra water.

Saturday, August 27 Belmar Historic Park

Leader: Karleen Schofield, 303-936-8661. Meet leader at 0900 at the park, 800 South Wadsworth Blvd. at W. Ohio Ave. Turn west on Ohio Ave, and go 2 blocks straight ahead into Irongate parking lot and to lake. Bring water, snacks and come ready for a half day in full sun. We may see the giant snapping turtle and will check on the fledglings from many different species of birds including wood ducks. There are often hawks and vultures and a nice variety of birds. This trip is fully accessible for those using wheelchairs and walkers.

Sunday, August 28 Prewitt and Jackson

Leader: Chris Owens and Jim Petri, 303-772-6048. Meet leaders at 0700 at Jim Hamm Park. From I-25 take Exit 240. To reach the park, go west four miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld County Line Road, then north two miles to Jim Hamm Park at 17th Ave. Bring lunch, water, appropriate clothing and come ready for an almost full day trip. Should see fall warblers, shorebirds and anything else that is wandering around. Will need State Parks pass and will need habitat pass for Prewitt. Call leader if you are going.

Sunday, August 28 Wheat Ridge Green Belt

Leader: Patti Echelmeyer, 303-233-4047. Meet leader at 0800 at Prospect Park Lake south of West 44th Ave. just east of Robb St. for a leisurely, half-day trip on wheelchair accessible trails. Bring drinking water and snacks. There are several nice places to enjoy your lunch after the trip if you wish. This trip is great for new members and birders of all skill levels.

Scheduled by Jackie King

Meeting Presentations, continued



Monday, September 26

Climate and land use influence breeding success in shortgrass prairie birds.

Reesa Yale Conrey is a wildlife biologist with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory in Fort Collins. Reesa directs mountain plover population research in western Nebraska and works with landowners to conserve plover nests on crop fields. Prior to joining RMBO this year, Reesa was a post-doctoral researcher at the U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center where she studied climate effects on prairie birds. Reesa got her PhD in Ecology in May 2010 from Colorado State University, where she studied the habits and ecology of burrowing owls nesting in black-tailed prairie dog burrows in Colorado. Her dissertation research addressed the effects of rainfall and plague on breeding owls of the Pawnee National Grassland.

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15pm; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30.** If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts.*

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

Contact: Victoria Collier, communications coordinator, 970-482-1707 ext. 30; victoria.collier@rmbo.org
Bill Wilson, Birds & Beans, 857-233-2722

FORT COLLINS, Colo. — Do you know that you can help birds with the coffee you drink? Colorado-based Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, a nonprofit that works for bird and habitat conservation in the western U.S. and Mexico, has joined with Birds & Beans® to inform consumers about shade-grown organic coffee independently certified by the Smithsonian Migratory Bird Center as Bird Friendly®.

Most coffee Americans drink is grown in sun with chemical fertilizers and pesticides on monoculture farms that clear-cut the tropical forest, destroying habitat for local and migratory birds and other wildlife. Shade-grown-organic-coffee habitat in Latin America provides shelter and sustenance to huge numbers of birds— migratory vireos, thrushes, warblers, orioles, tanagers, kingbirds, hummingbirds, hawks and others that spend their summers in North America, as well as resident birds found nowhere else. Independent research documents that Smithsonian-certified farms make a significant difference for birds and for overall biodiversity. These farms meet the highest standards of habitat quality and protection using sustainable agriculture that is good for birds, workers and the earth.

Birds & Beans is the sole brand in the United States that roasts only Smithsonian-certified Bird Friendly® coffee, meaning that 100 percent of the beans in every bag are organic and shade grown. Birds & Beans coffee is also Fair-Trade certified and is artisan-roasted in small batches within three days of shipment. A portion of Birds & Beans sales in the Rocky Mountain and Great Plains states will be donated to the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory to support priority bird-conservation needs.

“RMBO welcomes this opportunity to support conservation across borders,” said Executive Director Tammy Ver-Cauteren. “We believe that engaging people in solutions for conservation is vital. Simple measures like changing the coffee we drink can significantly help birds.” Birds & Beans® offers 100%-organic shade-grown coffee, is dedicated to the conservation of North America’s migratory birds, and helps promote and preserve Bird Friendly® family farming. Learn more by visiting www.RMBO.org or www.birdsandbeans.com or nationalzoo.si.edu/scbi/

Field Trip Summaries for May 2011

May 1 *Gregory Canyon/Walden Ponds*

Date: 5/1/11 Time birding: 6:30 am to 12:30 pm. Habitats: Foothills Canyon, ponds, riparian. Distance: Car 14 mi Foot: 4 mi. Weather: Partly Cloudy to overcast Temp: 35 to 49 degrees Wind: 1 - 4 mph. Leaders: Ira Sanders, Tammy Sanders Observers: Kiki Widjaja. Gregory Canyon species 27, Walden Ponds 55 species.

May 7 *McCabe Meadows Park*

Time birding: 0700 am to 12 pm. Habitats: riparian and open water, plains. Distance: Car 2 mi Foot: 4 mi. Weather: Partly Cloudy to overcast Temp: 50 to 70°. Wind: 5 - 10 mph. Leader Steve Kennedy, Observers, Mary Burger, Tom Burger, Dave Driscoll, Mary Driscoll, Gail Evans, Patti Galli, Peggy Gonder, Wayne Haggerty, Barbara Hollums, Don Hollums, Deb Kennedy, Greg Lengsfeld, Yvonne Parrott, Ted Pinkert, Andy Spellman, Oliver Spellman, Tanner Spellman, 58 species, 409 individuals.

May 8 *Pawnee National Grasslands/Windsor Lake*

Observers: Charles Hundertmark, Denver Field Ornithologists. Denver Field Ornithologists field trip to Pawnee National Grasslands. Report for Pawnee posted separately. This report includes stops at Black Hollow Reservoir, a small pond on the west side of CO257, and Windsor Lake. Trip participants included Meredith Anderson Bill Buttner Judy Carrier Cheryl Chesick Chris Goulant Lyn Graves Cyndy Johnson Robert Martinez Bruce Neuman Colleen Numm Yvonne Parrott Joann Pettinichio Sharon Pfeifer Toni Rautus Niña Routh Kara Spitler Kiki Widjaja. Meredith Anderson and one other observers left the party after the Pawnee portion of the trip.

Spring Count Summaries

May 12 *Castlewood Canyon State Park*

Leader Kirk Huffstater, observer Linda Broeren. Habitat Ponderosa Pine, Scrub Oak, Grassland. Distance 8 miles by car, two miles by foot. Weather cloudy, snowing. Temperature 35°. Species 31, individuals 214.

May 14. Waterton. Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery. Observers: Bill Freeman, Barb Haymond, John Haymond, Meredith McBurney, Bob Santangelo, Mike Serruto. Time: 0600-1430. Distance: 5 miles on foot, 10 miles by car. Habitat: riparian, grassland, river, ponds. Weather: cloudy, afternoon sprinkles. Totals: 90 Species, 1683 individuals.

May 15 *Rocky Mountain Arsenal*

Leader: Urling Kingery Observers: Time: 600-1645. Distance: 40 miles by car, 4 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, grassland, lakes Weather: Showers a.m., cloudy p.m. Totals: 104 species, 2848 individuals.

May 21 *Rigli Ranch*

Leader Joe Rigli. Observers, Gail Evans, Clint and Carol Flynn, Brenda Hofman, Clifford and Pauline Ide, Frances Sperl. Tim 8.30am-3:30pm. Habitat: Sandhill-sage, brush, grasslands, short-grass prairie, riparian woodlands, ponds, fields farmlands. Weather cool, calm cloudy sunny in the morning, cool northwest breeze 5-10mph cloudy light rain in pm 51-62°. Elevation 4330ft. Distance 10 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. Totals 55 species, Individuals 370. Highlights: Two Red-tailed Hawk nests, Spotted Sandpiper, Long-billed Dowitcher, Wilson's Phalarope, one Great-horned Owl nest with two young in it. Red-headed Woodpecker, Northern Waterthrush, Ovenbird, Grasshopper Sparrow.

May 28-30 *Crescent Lake NWR, Nebraska.*

Leader: Mary Burger, observers Gail Evans and Christy Honnen. Weather Cool 50-60 degrees, Overcast. East wind up to 20 mph. 670 miles driven. 3 day total 112 species.

Highlights: Day 1 53 species. At Overland Trail Park at Sterling Rest area Gail saw a Yellow-billed Cuckoo and we followed it into a set of willows near the S. Platte River and got into flycatchers and other insect eaters. Also stopped at Tamarack Ranch and Ash Hollow in Nebr and the 17 Ranch Winery in Lewellen before spending the night in Oshkosh.

Day 2 Oshkosh to Alliance we birded through ranch land and the Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Water levels were very high due to recent rains. No shore for shorebirds. The Long-billed Curlews loved it...we saw 8 pair. The white-rump sandpipers and pectoral sandpipers were on the road where the water was over the road. Most unusual were the Red-necked Phalaropes. 83 species that day.

Day 3 Alliance NE to Wildcat Hills south of Scottsbluff. Crossing the North Platte river we sighted a field of 16 Cattle Egrets. We arrived at the Wildcat Hills just as they were opening the Nature Center and filling the feeders. Pine siskins, A. Goldfinches and Pine Grosbeaks rushed in. Around the parking lot yardlight the insect eaters were feasting on Miller Moths: Mt. Bluebirds, Warbling and Red-eyed Vireo, Swainson's Thrush and of course Robins. We walked the trails for the nuthatches and such. 30 species.

Continued on page 7

What's happening to birds we know and love?

Audubon's unprecedented analysis of 40 years of citizen-science bird population data from our own Christmas Bird Count plus the Breeding Bird Survey reveals alarming declines for many of our most common and beloved birds.

Since 1967 the average population of the common birds in steepest decline has fallen by 68 percent; some individual species nose-dived as much as 80 percent. All 20 birds on the national Common Birds in Decline list lost at least half their populations in just four decades. The findings point to growing impact from the many environmental challenges our birds face, from habitat loss from development, deforestation, and conversion of land to agriculture, to climate change. Only citizen action can make a difference for the birds and the state of our future.

Which Species? Why?

The wide variety of birds affected is reason for concern. Populations of meadowlarks and other grassland birds are diving because of suburban sprawl, industrial development, and the intensification of farming over the past 50 years. Greater Scaup and other tundra-breeding birds are succumbing to dramatic changes to their breeding habitat as the permafrost melts earlier and more temperate predators move north in a likely response to global warming. Boreal forest birds like the Boreal Chickadee face deforestation from increased insect outbreaks and fire, as well as excessive logging, drilling, and mining.

One thing these common species all share is the grim potential to become uncommon - unless we all take action to protect them and their habitat. To find out more, including a detailed look at the top 20 species involved visit <http://birds.audubon.org/common-birds-decline>. We list details below of the top 10 birds in decline, lots more information on the Audubon website.

1. NORTHERN BOBWHITE **Population decline:** 31 million to 5.5 million (82 percent)

ID: Chubby, robin-sized bird that runs along the ground in groups. Brown body and striped face (black-and-white facial stripes in males; brown and tan in females). **Voice:** A clear, whistled *bob-white*. **Habitat:** Grasslands mixed with shrubs or widely spaced trees. **Threats:** The loss of suitable bobwhite habitat—from largescale agriculture, intensive pine-plantation forestry, and development—is the most dominant threat to the long-term survival of these common grassland birds. Losses to nest predators, and even fire ants—competing for food, attacking nests, and prompting humans to spray pesticides—also seem to be contributing to the bobwhite's decline. **Outlook:** Major efforts under way to increase good bobwhite habitat, including the Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative, should reverse drops in the populations of bobwhites and other grassland birds.

2. EVENING GROSBEAK **Population decline:** 17 million to 3.8 million (78 percent)

ID: Rotund, robin-sized black-and-yellow songbird with black-and-white wings and a triangular yellow beak; females drabber than males; usually seen in flocks. **Voice:** Loud *peer*. **Habitat:** Breeds primarily in coniferous forests, secondarily in deciduous forests. In non-breeding season, it feeds on both coniferous and deciduous tree seeds and buds, and on sunflower seeds in birdfeeders. **Threats:** Evening grosbeaks, as birds of boreal and montane forests, are susceptible to anything that affects those habitats: logging, mining, drilling, global warming, acid rain, and development for transportation and housing. Chemical control of spruce budworm and other tree pests reduces this species' food supply and may cause secondary poisoning. Competition and the spread of disease among house finches, goldfinches, and other feeder birds may also hasten the fall. **Outlook:** The evening grosbeak teaches us how bird populations can change dramatically. Virtually unknown east of the Mississippi River until about 1850, it expanded east—peaking in the mid-1980s—then plummeted. Its future will depend on maintaining healthy habitat in the boreal forest.

3. NORTHERN PINTAIL **Population decline:** 16 million to 3.6 million (77 percent)

ID: A mallard-sized “puddle duck,” with a slim body. The male is distinctive, with a long, pointed black tail, a gray body, and a brown head, with a white streak pointing up the side of the neck. The female is nondescript but tan and slim. **Voice:** Females quack like mallards; males most often make a high-pitched *whhee*, like a train whistle. **Habitat:** Nests in grassy uplands and untilled crop fields near shallow seasonal and semi-permanent Wetlands. Winters in shallow wetlands; often forages in harvested grain fields. **Threats:** Pintail population declines reflect the spread and intensification of agriculture in North America's prairie pothole region. (Alaskan breeding populations seem more stable.) Pintails nest earlier than most ducks, often in stubble fields, and thus suffer high nest losses when those fields undergo spring cultivation. The conversion of natural grasslands to row crops in the western Dakotas is especially harmful. **Outlook:** Improving pintail populations will require maintaining existing grasslands and wetlands, converting marginal croplands to grasslands through farm bill conservation programs, and encouraging fall planting in areas that remain in row crops.

4. GREATER SCAUP **Population decline:** 2 million to 506,000 (75 percent)

ID: The male is a black, gray, and white duck that is smaller than a mallard. The head, chest, and rump are black; the back is gray; and the belly and wing stripe are white. The female is brown, with a white facial mask and a white belly and wing stripe like the male's. **Voice:** A wide variety of vocalizations during active courtship; otherwise pretty quiet. **Habitat:** The greater scaup breeds along lakes and large ponds in open tundra complexes; winters in large lakes and along ocean coasts, usually in large rafts. **Threats:** Global warming is causing dramatic

What's happening to birds we know and love, continued

changes in the greater scaup's tundra breeding grounds, notably an earlier melting of permafrost and the invasion of formerly more southern species. In the Great Lakes, invasive species such as zebra mussels outcompete the native prey species on which the greater scaup relied. On the coasts, these birds are sensitive to oil spills and other water-quality issues that affect shellfish. **Outlook:** The greater scaup may turn out to be among the species most at risk from climate change. Its longterm fate will likely depend on how this issue is dealt with during the next decade.

5. BOREAL CHICKADEE

Population decline: 19.5 million to 5.2 million (73 percent)

ID: A small, active, grayish bird with a black chin, a brown cap, and brownish sides. **Voice:** A hoarse, slow version of the *chick-a-dee-dee* call of other chickadee species. **Habitat:** Mostly confined to black spruce and fir forests, including young and old trees; prefers wetter sites. **Threats:** The boreal chickadee is endemic to the boreal zone's spruce-fir forests, and is thus tied to its fate. Major threats there are global warming and excessive logging, drilling, and mining. Boreal chickadees respond favorably to spruce budworm outbreaks unless the chemical control of spruce budworm or other pests in spruce-fir forests overwhelm the food supply those insects represent. **Outlook:** A brighter future for the boreal chickadee will come with better logging, mining, and drilling practices, and by creating more protected areas within the boreal forest.

6. EASTERN MEADOWLARK **Population decline:** 24 million to 7 million (72 percent)

ID: Meadowlarks are light brown on the back and a brilliant yellow on the breast, which has a big, black V. They are robin-sized and usually seen on the ground or flying near it. **Voice:** The spring song is a melodic four-note whistle. **Habitat:** Prefers native grasslands and open savannas but is found in many human-altered grassy habitats. **Threats:** Like many grassland birds, meadowlarks are threatened by changes in farming. With the recent push for ethanol and other biofuels, there is a real danger that many acres currently being protected under the farm bill's Conservation Reserve Program will be converted from the meadowlarks' prairie habitat to cornfields. **Outlook:** The eastern meadowlark's short-term outlook isn't good because of the current push to grow more monocultures for ethanol as well as the continuing need for row crops to grow food. Improving this situation will depend on the inclusion of strong conservation provisions in the farm bill.

7. COMMON TERN

Population decline: Managed colonies along the Atlantic

Coast and Great Lakes are stable or increasing (300,000 individuals now). Breeding Bird Survey data suggest that populations in smaller unmanaged colonies have dropped from 100,000 to 30,000 (70 percent). **ID:** Slender, medium-sized, black-capped gray-and-white bird with a thin, pointed bill and a long, deeply forked tail. Often seen flying low along coasts, diving for fish, or sitting in groups on beaches. **Voice:** Long, harsh *keeeerrrr*. **Habitat:** Nests on islands with sparse vegetation; forages for fish (90 percent of its diet) near shore in oceans, lakes, and rivers. Feeds farther offshore in winter, mostly in saltwater. **Threats:** Human development along lakes and rivers threatens nest sites; pollution can deplete fish in lakes and rivers; sea-level rise due to global warming endangers some coastal colonies. In South America common terns are illegally killed for food during the non-breeding season. **Outlook:** Preserving the common tern will require intensive management of breeding colonies; the protection of lakes and rivers; helping terns compete with gulls for nest sites; deterring predators; and creating new colony sites.

8. LOGGERHEAD SHRIKE

Population decline: 10 million to 3 million (70 percent)

ID: A robin-sized gray bird with black wings (and white wing patches), a black mask, and a black tail. A close look reveals a hooked beak. **Voice:** Harsh *bzeek, bzeek* alarm call. Song is a very quiet combination of short trills, clear notes, and harsh notes. **Habitat:** Short grass with isolated trees or shrubs, especially pastureland. **Threats:** The decline of the loggerhead shrike is similar to that of other grassland and so-called early successional species. A lot of northeastern farmland has been abandoned and is either reverting to forest or being lost to suburbs or other human development. In the rest of the country, farmland is being used more intensively, leaving dwindling habitat for loggerhead shrikes and other grass-loving birds. **Outlook:** In the southeastern United States, the best hope for loggerhead shrikes is the Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative, which is focused on restoring brushy habitat along field edges. Similar efforts should be pursued in other portions of the species' range. The landscape in the northeastern United States may already be too altered to allow the loggerhead shrike to return.

9. FIELD SPARROW

Population decline: 18 million to 5.8 million (68 percent)

ID: Small brown songbird with a light rusty cap and a bright-pink bill. **Voice:** A distinctive song is sung in minor-key notes that start slowly then speed up into a trill, then repeat. **Habitat:** Found in abandoned fields with scattered shrubs and trees. **Threats:** Habitat loss is the major threat to this species. Field sparrows require successional habitats that are steadily being lost to agriculture, forestry, and buildings. **Outlook:** Field sparrows may never regain their former abundance, but it might be possible to stabilize their populations by working to ensure the management of suitable habitat for this and other species that depend on successional grassland and shrub habitats.

10. GRASSHOPPER SPARROW **Population decline:** 31 million to 11 million (65 percent)

ID: A fairly nondescript, small brown bird with a short tail and a flat head that spends a lot of time hiding in the grass. Look for a plain buffy chest, a yellow-orange spot in front of the eye, and a white line on top of its head. **Voice:** The song is an insectlike trill preceded by two short, quiet notes. **Habitat:** Prefers larger patches of grassland, usually with few shrubs or trees; specific preferences vary in different parts of its range. **Threats:** Conversion of grassland habitats to cropland continues in the Great Plains. Woody vegetation is penetrating natural grasslands in the East. Hayfields and other managed grasslands are often mowed during the breeding season when young birds are in the nest. Some grasslands are burned too frequently or grazed too heavily to retain enough cover for breeding. **Outlook:** It is hard to imagine this grassland bird species will ever reach its historic highs before Europeans transformed the continent for modern agriculture. Increasing recognition of the importance of grassland conservation should bolster this species throughout much of its range.

May Field Trip Summaries, continued

May 30 88th and Platte River

Leader Jackie King, Observers, Mark Amorshek, Donna Cross and Andrew, Wayne Haggarty. Duration 4 hours. Elevation 5380 ft. Habitat, riparian. Weather warm and clear, 59-68°. Total species 39, individuals 464.

Tuesday Birders

May 3, 2011 Lair O' the Bear Jeffco Open Space Park (LAI)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Else Van Erp, Mary Keithler. Observers 47 (three groups). Time: 0900-1300. Distance: 5.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, cottonwood, willow, some ponderosa pine & blue spruce, elevation 6427'-7361'. Weather: mostly sunny to mostly cloudy, 50-62°F., East wind, 0-10 mph. Totals: 36 species, 136 individuals.

May 10, 2011 South Valley Jeffco Open Space Park (SOU)

Leader(s): Else van Erp. Observers: 8. Time: 0900-1200. Distance: 2.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Scrub oak, mountain mahogany, cottonwood, willow, meadows, rock outcrops, pond, elevation 5,700' to 6,000'. Weather: Sunny, 52-72°F, wind SW 4-15 mph. Totals: 27 species, 107 individuals.

May 10, 2011 Deer Creek Canyon Park (DDCP)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Mary Keithler. Observers: 22. Time: 0900-1200. Distance: 2.7 miles on foot. Habitat: Scrub oak, mountain mahogany, cottonwood, willow, meadows, large rocks, elevation 6,000 to 6,400'. Weather: Sunny, 52-72°F, SW wind, 4-15 mph. Totals: 30 species, 110 individuals.

May 17, 2011 Lower White Ranch Park (LWRP)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Else van Erp, Mary Keithler. Observers: 28 (three groups). Time: 0900-1300. Distance: 4.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, cottonwood, willow, chokecherry, elevation 6150-6600'. Weather: Mostly cloudy, 47-52°F, wind E, 4-7 mph. Totals: 49 species, 161 individuals.

May 24, 2011 Audubon Center at Chatfield (AUD)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. Observers: 29. Time: 0830-0900, 1040-1200. Distance: 3.0 miles on foot. Habitat: /Riparian, cottonwood groves, open meadows, ponds, elevation 5510'. Weather: Light showers, thunder, 46-50°F, wind variable 3-7 mph. Totals: 46 species, 158 individuals.

May 24, 2011 RMBO / Audubon Banding Station (RMBO)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. Observers: 29. Time: 0900-1030. Distance: 0.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, cottonwood groves, open meadows, ponds, elevation 5510'. Weather: Light showers, thunder, 46-50°F, wind variable 0-7 mph. Totals: 12 species, 24 individuals.

May 31, 2011 Rocky Mountain Arsenal (RMA)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. Observers: 39. Time: 0900-1230. Distance: 2.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Plains riparian, wetlands, plains shortgrass prairie, cottonwoods and man made lakes, elevation 5250'. Weather: Sunny, 63-73°F, wind W/NW, 0-5 mph. Totals: 51 species, 361 individuals. *To see individual bird tallies, details are in an excel spreadsheet at www.dfobirders.org.*

Governor to launch environmental learning center at BBQ for the Birds

BRIGHTON, Colo. —Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory will host the annual BBQ for the Birds and celebrate the grand opening of its Environmental Learning Center (ELC), with Governor John Hickenlooper cutting the ribbon, on August 27 at RMBO's Old Stone House at Barr Lake near Brighton. Festivities begin at 7 a.m. with bird walks and bird banding. "The Big Year" author Mark Obmascik will wrap up the event at 1 p.m. by telling stories about birding, writing the book and making the movie of the same name, which is due for release in October. The day's activities also include workshops on backyard habitat, birding and conservation, live raptors, music, a silent auction, lunch catered by the Brighton Depot and more. The governor will be joined by Brighton's mayor and other local officials at 11 a.m. to launch the new ELC, which features a classroom, an outdoor amphitheater, trails and interpretive signage. Demonstration gardens of native plants will be installed in the fall. "The new learning center will help show people what they can do in their own backyards to create healthy habitats for birds — and themselves," said Kacie Ehrenberger, RMBO's director of education. "We are excited about having kids, families and adults come here to have fun and connect with nature."

RSVP for the event at www.rmbo.org or by contacting kelly.thompson@rmbo.org or 303-659-4348 ext. 12. Register by August 19 for \$1 off per person. Admission at the door is \$10 for RMBO members, \$12 for non-members and \$6 for ages 5 through 12.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Chuck Hundertmark,
2546 Lake Meadow Dr. Lafayette, CO 80026
cahmark@Q.com 303.604.0531

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Shade,
13861 W Dakota Ave, Lakewood, CO 80228
wrshade3@gmail.com 303.975.2476

TREASURER

Mary Geder,
13831 W Harvard Dr. Lakewood, CO 80228
mfg5000@live.com 303.986.6127

SECRETARY

Newell Grant,
1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood Village, CO
80121 nmgrantsr@aol.com 303.761.9967

DIRECTORS

Chris Blakeslee (2013) chrisabla@aol.com
John Drummond (2012) jxdrummo@aol.com
Tina Jones (2014) tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2014) kay@kayniyo.com
Ira Sanders (2014) greatauk@msn.com
Connie Steinkamp (2012) ricconcal@comcast.net
Lynn Willcockson (2014) lynnliz2698@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place,
Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler , 303.904.9140
Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Oct-11 Chris Owens christieowens2@me.com
Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21,
Elizabeth, CO 80107. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532,
veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421,
email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact
person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email
d_d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st. If more convenient, you can pay for more than one year, just make sure you make a note of that when you submit your payment.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic (legible) *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



The Five-week Arctic Pelagic
with Bill Schmoker
Monday August 22, 7.30om



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

SEPTEMBER 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 9

DFO Feature Presentation: Monday, September 26

Climate and land use influence breeding success in shortgrass prairie birds with Reesa Yale Conrey.

Reesa Yale Conrey is a wildlife biologist with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory in Fort Collins. Reesa directs mountain plover population research in western Nebraska and works with landowners to conserve plover nests on crop fields. Prior to joining RMBO this year, Reesa was a post-doctoral researcher at the U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center where she studied climate effects on prairie birds.

Reesa got her PhD in Ecology in May 2010 from Colorado State University, where she studied the habits and ecology of burrowing owls nesting in black-tailed prairie dog burrows in Colorado. Her dissertation research addressed the effects of rainfall and plague on breeding owls of the Pawnee National Grassland. Reesa will discuss how variation in



Continued on page 3



September Field Trips

Saturday, September 3th

Plants that Attract Hummingbirds

Leader: Tina Jones, 303-906-5479. Meet leader at 0830. Attract hummingbirds to your yard by using specific plants, flowers and other sure fire techniques. This is a two hour field class. For more information and to PRE-REGISTER call the number above. Space is very limited.

Sunday, September 4th

Northeastern Colorado, Prewitt and Jackson Reservoirs

Leader: Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748. Meet leader at 0530 at the Division of Wildlife, 6060 No. Broadway – Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 1 block to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to parking lot on right. Annual SWA Permit (per person) and State Parks Pass required. This is an all day trip so bring lunch and plenty of water. Be sure to bring insect repellent and sunscreen. Call leader if going. Get your SWA Permit here: <https://www3.wildlifelicense.com/co/start.php> (Start button at the bottom of page on their site) or phone (303) 297-1192 during business hours.



Saturday/Sunday, September 10th & 11th

Fall Count

Denver has conducted Fall Bird Counts for over 20 years. Denver Field Ornithologists and ASGD sponsor this tradition. No fees, but some sites require a state parks pass or pre-registration. Bring binoculars, scopes for the reservoir counts, field guide, and lunch. Everyone welcome to help – more eyes see more birds.

Saturday, September 10

* **Cherry Creek Reservoir.** Leader: Cheryl Teuton & Dan Brooks, 303-912-3341. Meet at 0700 at Marina, inside west gate near Cherry Creek High School. State Parks Pass required.

Continued on next page

September Field Trips, continued

- * **Waterton**, downstream. 4-5 mile hike. Wear long pants (not shorts) due to bare-leg-unfriendly plants such as poison ivy, thistles, and knapweed. Leader: Hugh Kingery, 303-641-8823. Meet at 0630 at Audubon Nature Center (left turn immediately after turning onto Waterton/Roxborough road and before the DOW parking lot for Waterton Canyon).
- * **Chatfield State Park**, Leader, Joey Kellner, 303-978-1748. Meet at 0630 at West (Deer Creek) entrance to park. State Parks Pass required.
- * **Lower Bear Creek & Marston Reservoir**. Leader: Mike Henwood, 303-716-8551, hawkhen@aol.com, meet at 0630 at parking lot adjacent to the Conoco Station at the NE corner of Morrison Road and C470. We will bird Bear Creek Lake Park and the Bear Creek Greenbelt in the morning and Marston Reservoir in the afternoon.

Sunday September 11

- * **Barr Lake periphery**. This trip, mostly driving, does not involve much walking and will be good for people with limited mobility or stamina. Leader: Dick Anderson, 303-757-4582 Phone leader, or send email to him at rdholmesanderson@earthlink.net. Meet at 0700 at Barr Lake Entrance Station.
- * **Castlewood Canyon State Park** Leader: Kirk Huffstater, 303-660-9298. Meet at 0630 at the Homestead. From CO 86, 0.5 miles west of Franktown, turn south on Castlewood Canyon Road, go two miles to old entrance; Homestead is first parking lot on the left. State Parks pass required.
- * **Barr Lake State Park**. This is a ten-mile (or equivalent), all-day hike around the lake. Leader: Dick Schottler, 303-278-8035. Meet at 0630 at RMBO, 14500 Lark Bunting Lane. South off Bromley Lane; from I-76, first road east of railroad track. State Parks pass required.
- * **Rocky Mountain Arsenal**. Leader: Urling Kingery, 303-641-8823. Call leader to sign up; spaces available.

Saturday, September 17th

Fort Collins Cemetery and Surroundings

Leader: Dave Leatherman, 970-416-0193. Meet leader at 0800. Meet at the entrance to Grandview Cemetery, Fort Collins, at the west end of Mountain Avenue. Exit I-25 at the Mulberry/SR14 exit (#269). Go west on Mulberry 5 miles to Shields Street, turn right (north) on Shields, go just about 0.4 miles to Mountain Avenue, turn left (west) on Mountain, and go about 0.7 miles to the cemetery entrance. We might see migrant passerines, mountain species dispersing for migration and/or winter, hawks overhead, who knows? In 2010 during this same week, the cemetery had a Great Crested Flycatcher, Peregrine Falcon flyover, changing of the guard winter species like creepers and Mountain Chickadees starting to show up, Williamson's and Red-naped Sapsuckers, MacGillivray's Warbler, and Hammond's Flycatcher plus the usuals.

We will discuss the changing of the seasons and how plants play an important part in this. Hopefully we can examine the spruce architecture Broad-tailed Hummingbirds prefer for nesting by examining nests used in 2010 and 2011. Participants will be given the chance to examine insect pinatas and complete a scavenger hunt that includes "birdy" headstones. In short we will celebrate LIFE in the graveyard. Cemetery portion of the trip should be over by noon. Depending on what has been seen in the area, we may opt to go somewhere else between the end of lunch and mid-afternoon. PLEASE PRE-REGISTER by emailing Dave at daleatherman@msn.com or calling the number above. No limit to the number of people (but folks should know there are only 2000 unsold plots left). Dave has been birding in Colorado since 1974, been to the cemetery over 1100 times over that span, and seen 188 species there. He's currently writing a book about "two years in the LIFE of (Grandview) cemetery", which among many things, will cover the White-winged Crossbill nestings in 2010, the whole natural cycle of events (trees, birds, flowers, insects, mammals, ditch creatures, etc.), and compare the years 2010 and 2011.

Sunday, September 18th

Rocky Mountain Arsenal

Leader: Dave Rhoades, 303-424-8633 Meet leader at 0800 at the new Visitor Center. We'll bird until about 1:00PM. Participants must PRE-REGISTER after August 21st. The new V.C. can be reached from 64th and Quebec. Turn east onto 64th which becomes Prairie Parkway, go 1/2 mile and take the first left and onto Gateway. From there the new VC is about 1 mile on Gateway. If you miss this trip: The Refuge and all trails are open to birding Tue-Sun 6-6 and birding programs are offered most months. Some are designed for field birding. Others begin inside and are intended to teach the basics of birding.

Continued on page 5

Meeting Presentations, continued

climate and land use influence the ecology of mountain plovers, burrowing owls, and passerines of the short-grass prairie, as well as conservation efforts targeting these species. RMBO's work on crop fields in western Nebraska helped to demonstrate the potential for successful mountain plover reproduction on agricultural lands and influenced the decision against federal listing of plovers. Rates of plover nest success on Nebraskan crop fields have been higher than most estimates in other habitat types. Landowner efforts in locating nests and preserving them from tillage are key to plover success in crop fields.

However, climate and land use are highly variable over space and time, creating pockets of high productivity as well as "good" and "bad" seasons for breeding success of prairie birds. Nest survival in most ground nesting shortgrass species is depressed by large rainfall events, but other responses to temperature and rainfall differ markedly by species. For example, plovers and owls, which prefer shorter vegetation structure, were much more successful in dryer weather, while lark buntings, which prefer taller vegetation, were more successful during wetter springs. Our wet spring and summer in 2011 has contributed to a halving of the plover nest success rate observed in 2010. Reesa's objective with RMBO is to provide science-based recommendations about tillage, herbicides, and population goals for mountain plovers on private lands within the context of changing climate and differing responses of other shortgrass prairie birds.



The 5-week Arctic Pelagic with Bill Schmoker

The DFO Feature Presentations resume on Monday August 22 with an icy blast!

Join Bill for a talk about his experiences (birding and otherwise) aboard an icebreaker last summer in the Arctic Ocean. Bill spent five weeks at sea aboard the US Coast Guard Cutter Healy, a 420-foot icebreaker, as a PolarTREC teacher assigned to the Canada-US joint expedition surveying the extended continental shelf north of both countries.

The cruise reached a latitudinal high point of 82.5°N, 139° W (over 800 miles north of Pt. Barrow, AK.) Over the course of the trip many interesting birds, other wildlife, and high arctic phenomena were encountered, and Bill will recount these along with other interesting aspects of the cruise. For a preview check out <http://www.polar trec.com/expeditions/international-continental-shelf-survey>.

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15pm; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30.** If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts.*

Welcome New Member

Ellen Zachary, 3047 W 47th Ave #311, Denver, CO 80211, 720-206-6307

Field Trip Summaries for June 2011

June 4 Pine/Bailey Area

Leader: Chris Blakeslee Observers: Mary Cay and Tom Burger, Patty Echelmeyer, Gail Evans
Clint and Carol Flynn, Chris Goulart, Harry Hall, Dick Prickett, Jim Rouse, Tom Schlosser, Sue Schulman, Bob and Micki Shade. Time: 07:30 - 4:30 p.m. Distance: 41 miles driving; 2.5 miles on foot Elevation: 6,600 to 8,400 feet. Habitat: Mixed Conifer forest, Aspen Groves, lakes, and riparian Weather: Cloudy clearing to part cloudy, but hazy (forest fires), calm to slight breeze, 50 - mid 70s degrees (F) 59 species (461/ individuals): Trip Highlights: An unexpected Virginia's Warbler in a Ponderosa Pine forest, a female Common Merganser with 12 new ducklings, and about 8 Great Blue Heron nestlings in the Bailey Heron Rookery.

June 5 Roxborough State Park

Leader, Alison Kondler, Observers: Lynn Miller, Carol Larsen, Peggy Wait, Tina Jones, Deb Ostergard, Gretchen Moritz, Hale & Sandie Booth, Marge Burgess, Wayne Haggarty, Mike Petock, Leann Josbrick, Louis Lubin, Dick Prickett, Patrica Henschen, Jim Larsen, Mary Geder, Margie Mills & 5 others - names NA. From, 8:30 AM, To, 12:12 AM, Elevation 6204. Habitat: Scrub Oak, Ponderosa, Short Grass Step, Stream Beds, Distance by on Foot, 1.5 miles. Weather Cloudy, 43/46, Wind, N 5 - 10 mph. Totals: Species 28, Individuals 118.

June 11 Red Rocks Park

Leader Tom Bush. Thirteen participants made the walk with an extra two (Marilyn and Tom Rhodes) that arrived late due to parking difficulties but were able to join another walk in progress led by The Audubon Society of Greater Denver. Our Red Rocks DFO Walk accomplished on Saturday June 11 proved very rewarding and productive. It was a beautiful blue sky morning with temperatures ranging from the mid seventies to about 85 degrees. The trip followed the lower Trading Post loop of about 1.4 miles with a short extension to the area above the amphitheater and also an area just north of the Trading Post. The walk began at 8 AM and we disbanded after having a snack/lunch back at the Trading Post porch compiling our sightings. Of the many species seen, the nesting Prairie Falcon chicks at the lower end of the Trading Post trail, a Peregrine Falcon seen above the amphitheater from the upper south parking lot, a pair of singing Canyon Wrens, and the spectacular aerial display of White Throated Swifts, all proved to be very special. You can download a map of the Trading Post Trail by visiting <http://www.redrocksonline.com/PURENATURE/Trails.aspx>. The Prairie Falcons can be seen on the west side of what is known as Park Cave Rock. The Peregrine can be seen on the west side of Ship Rock.

All in all we observed 40 species of birds and 371 individuals. The individual count was greatly helped by the large flocks of White Throated Swifts and extensive colonies of Cliff Swallows. I was delighted to lead the walk. Everyone was very happy with it. It was my first DFO walk and please consider me for any more. I did learn a lot about the walks and how they are documented. Thanks again for having me lead the Red rocks Walk for DFO.

June 12 Belmar Park, Kountze Lake

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee and Sue Schulman, Observers: Mary Geder, Wayne Haggarty, Merikay Haggerty, Jackie Heyda, Glenn Rodriguez, Joe Roller, Mark Wallace, Kiki Widjaja. Time: 07:00 - 1:00 p.m., Distance: 2 miles on foot, Elevation: 5,200 feet, Habitat: Urban Park; lake, riparian, and grassland/ Weather: Clear but Hazy (forest fires), Calm to Slight Breeze, 58 - 85 degrees (F). - 41 species (283 individuals): Animals: Cottontails, Fox Squirrels, Muskrat, sign of Beaver, Painted Turtles, Red-eared Slider Turtles; Carp in lake were pretty active. Highlights had to be the 3 Wood Duck ducklings, the diving Mallard ducklings and the blue-legged American Avocet chicks. The Avocets and the Spotted Sandpipers were still in their mating frenzy and the Kingfisher and other species were working their hearts out to feed their newborn chicks.

June 18 Lair 'o the Bear

Leader Niña Routh. Observers Cheryl Chessie, Tim Duggan, John & Lucy James, Clint Jones, Debbie & Norm Lewis, Robert Martinez, Lyn Gravesm Sharon Pfeifer, Toni Rautus, Paul Slingsby, Don & Melissa Stone, Kara Spitzer, Dave Szaltzer. Time 8-12 noon. Habitat, Riparian/Pine. Weather Sunny, few clouds 60-72°. Miles covered, 2-5 miles on foot. Highlights 2 F broadtail hummers on nest, GBH perched on a branch over the river like a sentinel, warbling vireo on her nest and singing, at least 5 male Western Tanagers singing for territory, and Bear Creek Tavern - a great group and terrific day!

June 19 Golden Gate Canyon SP, Gilpin and Jefferson

Leaders: Ira Sanders, Tammy Sanders Observers: Mary Geder, Judy Lane, Bruce Neumann, Tim Smart. Time 6:30 AM - 3:30 PM. Miles by car, 61, on Foot: 2 miles. Habitat: Forest, Riparian. 61 species 561 individuals.

June 25 Rigli Ranch

Leader Joe Rigli. Observers, Mary Cay Burger, Diane Carter, Carol Cogswell, Mary Geder, John Naycraft, Cliff and Pauline

Continued on next page

September Field Trips, continued

Saturday, September 24th

Chatfield State Park

Leader: Ed Holub, 303-979-2194 Meet leader at 0800 at the swim beach parking lot (West side of reservoir). Directions: Inside the west entrance of park off S. Wadsworth, 1½ miles south of C-470. Expect to see lots of fall migrants. Half day trip.

Sunday, September 25th

Cherry Creek Reservoir

Leader: Mary Keithler, 303-771-1421. Meet leader at 0800 at the west Marina off the Dayton St entrance. No registration required. Half day trip. Bring snacks, water, binoculars, and scope. There should be some migrant ducks and grebes, maybe some shorebirds, plus a variety of passerines and raptors. About the leader: Mary is an Audubon Master Birder and lives near Cherry Creek State Park.



June Field Trip Summaries, continued

Ide, Lois Levinson, Kay Niyo, Bob and Mick Shade, Marleen Swalm. Time: 9am – 3pm. Habitat sandhill sagebrush, grasslands short-grass prairie, riparian woodlands, ponds, fields, farmlands. Weather warm, southwest wind 10mph. clear to partly cloudy, sunny in am. Elevation 4330. Distance 10 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. Totals: 31 species, 139 individuals. Highlights: two young red-tailed hawks on nest, one female Great-horned Owl being harassed in the air by 4 West Kingbirds, one Western Kingbird on the nest, one Loggerhead Shrike next with 4 young, one Western Meadowlark flushed from its nest containing 5 eggs, and one singing first year male Orchard Oriole.

June 26

Alfred M Bailey Nesting Area, Blue River Campground /Silverthorne Sewage Treatment Plant

Leader Toni Rautus. Observers Meredith Anderson, Jim Duggan, Mary Geder, Lyn Graves, Judy Lane, Tresa Moulton, David Moulton, Bruce Newman, Colleen Nunn, Mary O'Connor, Dick Prickett. Time: 8:00 A.M. - 1:30pm. Elevation 9500 ft. Habitat mixed conifer forest, mountain meadow, riparian. Distance covered on foot 3 miles. Weather sunny 70-75°F. Highlights: Osprey on nests, crimson pine cones, and watching feeding frenzy of rainbow trout at the sewage treatment plant. Species 31, individuals 149.

Tuesday Birders

June 7

Walden Ponds Nature Habitat

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell. Observers: 35. Time: 0830-1230. Distance: 2.75 miles on foot. Habitat: Wetlands, old gravel ponds, cottonwoods, willows, elevation 5200'. Weather: Sunny, 74-84°F, variable wind 3-13 mph. Totals: 42 species, 343 individuals.

June 14

Chatfield State Park (CHA)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Else van Erp, Bill Turner, Mary Keithler. Observers: 39 (four groups). Time: 0830-1230. Distance: 4.5 miles on foot, 9 miles by car. Habitat: Large reservoir, riparian, prairie grass, cottonwood, grassy areas, open water, shoreline, elevation 5430'. Weather: Mild, sunny, 62-78°F, NW wind 5-9 mph. Totals: 52 species, 329 individuals.

June 21

Reynolds Park Jeffco Open Space (REY)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Else van Erp, Bob Shade. Observers: 31 (three groups).. Time: 0830-1230. Distance: 4 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian with narrow leaf cottonwood, ponderosa pine and Douglas fir, elevation 7200-8000'. Weather: Sunny, clear, 50-63°F, wind NW 0-10 mph. Totals: 35 species, 187 individuals.

June 28

Pine Valley Ranch Jeffco Open Space Park (PIN)

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Else Van Erp, Mary Keithler. Observers: 30 (three groups). Time: 0830-1300. Distance: 4.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Mixed conifer forest, streamside willow, lake, burn area, ponderosa pine, blue spruce, Douglas fir and grassy meadows, elevation 6821'-7200'. Weather: Sunny to cloudy, 61-78 °F, east wind 0-6 mph. Totals: 37 species, 117 individuals.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Chuck Hundertmark,
2546 Lake Meadow Dr. Lafayette, CO 80026
cahmark@Q.com 303.604.0531

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Shade,
13861 W Dakota Ave, Lakewood, CO 80228
wrshade3@gmail.com 303.975.2476

TREASURER

Mary Geder,
13831 W Harvard Dr. Lakewood, CO 80228
mfg5000@live.com 303.986.6127

SECRETARY

Newell Grant,
1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood Village, CO
80121 nmgrantsr@aol.com 303.761.9967

DIRECTORS

Chris Blakeslee (2013) chrisabla@aol.com
John Drummond (2012) jxdrummo@aol.com
Tina Jones (2014) tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2014) kay@kayniyo.com
Ira Sanders (2014) greatauk@msn.com
Connie Steinkamp (2012) ricconcal@comcast.net
Lynn Willcockson (2014) lynnliz2698@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place,
Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler , 303.904.9140
Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Oct-11 Chris Owens christieowens2@me.com
Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21,
Elizabeth, CO 80107. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532,
veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421,
email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact
person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email
d_d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2011 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st. If more convenient, you can pay for more than one year, just make sure you make a note of that when you submit your payment.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic (legible) *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

- ◇ Monday August 22, 7.30pm—The Five-week Arctic Pelagic with Bill Schmoker
- ◇ Monday September 26—Climate and land use influence breeding success in shortgrass prairie birds with Reesa Yale Conrey.



Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

OCTOBER 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 10

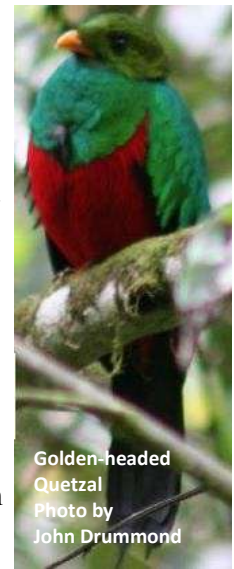
Birding Tourism

With Charles Thornton-Kolbe

Monday October 24, 7.30pm

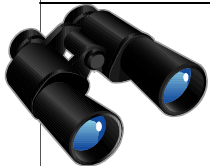
Many Colorado birders know that Charles Thornton-Kolbe has also served on the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO) Board for about five years and has served as the President of the DFO. Charles also served as the Coordinator for Audubon's Adopt-an-Important Bird Area Project for the Pawnee National Grasslands, and he is also an occasional compiler for the Colorado Rare Bird Alert.

Charles Thornton-Kolbe has been involved in managing, developing and occasionally participating in birding tourism for seven years. He is currently the Executive Partner of the Partnership for International Birding, a bird watching ecotourism firm providing over sixty birding trips worldwide each year, with a concentration of trips in South America. "Ecuador and South American are our second home for birding tourism", said Mr. Thornton-Kolbe.



Golden-headed
Quetzal
Photo by
John Drummond

Continued on page 3



October Field Trips

Saturday, October 1 Lair O' the Bear

Leader: Niña Routh 303.987.8687. Meeting place: Meet leader at 8:00 am at the Lair O' the Bear Park. From Morrison drive 4 miles west on C-74 to park entrance on left. (Be forewarned and observe the speed limits.) We'll be looking to see who is left from the Lair nursery and for any fall migrants including the usual foothills suspects. This is a half day trip. Bring snacks, water, binos, and good walking shoes for an approximately 2.5 to 3 mile hike. Dress in the usual layers for a fall day. **RSVP:** Please phone leader to register. This trip is limited in number of participants.

Sunday, October 2 Boulder Area Ponds

Leader: Paul Slingsby 303.422.3728. Please notify the leader (paslingsby@comcast.net) Meet at the Ward Road Park-n-Ride just north of I-70 on Ward Road in the western part of Wheatridge at 7:30 am. Call leader if you plan to attend. Trip will end at about 3 pm and will involve 2 miles of walking. Bring water and a sack lunch and plan for variable weather. Telescopes and 2 way radios will be useful.

Saturday, October 8 Central South Platte River

Leader: Jackie King 720.381.3314. Meet leader at 0800 at Parking Lot Walnut at 4th and Walnut St on the Auraria Campus. Will walk along the greenbelt and see what birds are living in the heart of downtown Denver. Bring drinking water and snacks for a half day trip. Leader uses a scooter for mobility so the trip will be accessible. Parking costs \$2 for all day. From I-25 take Speer Blvd. South to Auraria Parkway then turn right to 7th St. At 7th St. turn left one block to Walnut. Turn right on Walnut and continue to 4th and you will see the parking lot on the South side of the street. Please call leader if going. Meeting place is very near to the Light Rail Station close to Elitch's Garden.

Continued on next page

October Field Trips, continued



Sunday, October 9 The Big Sit

Leader: Joey Kellner 303.978.1748 (Parks Pass required). Meeting place: Heron Overlook, Chatfield State Park. From Wadsworth Blvd. Entrance, go right at the T and continue around the reservoir. After you cross the South Platte River make a hard left into the large parking lot labeled Heronry Overlook. At the far right corner, a trail leads down to the Heron Overlook.

The Big Sit, an international birding event, has exacting, loose, and frivolous standards. Big Sitters count all the birds they see or hear from within a circle with a 17-foot diameter. Count Sitters may send out scouts and beaters to find other birds and identify them as long as a Sitter sees the bird from within the circle. All around the world, on this date, people will Big Sit!

Come and join Joey Kellner and other recruits any time after dawn. Stay for an hour, a morning, or all day. Drop by whenever you like or volunteer to substitute for Big Sit leaders for an hour or two. (Pre-registration not required.) Joey maintains an hourly chart of the birds that Sitters see from the circle. In the past few years he has tallied 55-65 species. Bring chairs, breakfast, lunch, dinner, picnics, coffee, etc. Bring binoculars, scopes, field guides, and other essential birding equipment.

Sunday, October 16 Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Gregg Goodrich. Meet Gregg at the Visitor's Center at 8:00 am. Bird until 12:00 noon. Bring water, appropriate clothing, and be prepared for a fun morning. Lunch is optional since you can return to the visitor's center and eat at picnic tables there.

Saturday, October 22 Cherry Creek State Park

Leader: Buzz Schaumberg. Meeting place: West entrance to Cherry Creek State Park at 9:00 am. Bring a scope if you have one, water, comfortable shoes, and appropriate clothing. This is a half-day trip and lunch is optional. If we find good birds we may continue for a while after lunch.

Sunday, October 23 Jackson and Prewitt Reservoirs

Leader: Norm Erthal (cell) 303.917.2569 nerthal@comcast.net. Meeting place: 7:00 am at Division of Wildlife, 6060 No. Broadway--Exit I-25 at 58th Ave., go west 1 block to Broadway, then north 2 blocks to the parking lot on the right. Participants will need an Annual SWA Permit per person and a State Parks Pass. This will be an all day trip so be sure to bring lunch, snacks, water, good walking shoes, and appropriate clothing for whatever weather is forecast. Please contact the leader if you are interested in attending and be sure to e-mail or call if you need to cancel your attendance.

Saturday, October 29 Prospect Park

Leader: Tom Parchman 303.274.7951. Meeting place: North side of the lake at the parking lot. Meet Tom at 8:00am for a ½ day trip. Bring water, snacks, and dress appropriately for the weather.

Sunday, October 30 Longmont Area

Leader: Chris Owens. Meeting place: Jim Hamm Park at 8:00 am. From I-25 take Exit 240. To reach the park, go west four miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld County Line Road, then north two miles to Jim Hamm Park at 17th Ave. Bring water, lunch, and appropriate clothing. Plan to bird until just after noon or mid afternoon, depending on the birds.

Scheduled by Christie Owens [christieowens2@me.com]

Meeting Presentations, continued

After completing graduate work at Harvard, Charles has spent most of his 20 year career as a quality management consultant and as an economist on Environmental Impact Statements, but has been focusing on birding tourism in the last decade. “At the PIB, we focus on providing excellent bird watching tours while maximizing support for local people. We believe developing and supporting ecotourism which is sustainable”, stated Mr. Thornton-Kolbe. Birding tourism now takes up over 80% of his professional life.

Ecuador is by far the most popular destination for bird watchers, who have fallen in love with international birding. Many birders wander to Costa Rica or Mexico due to inexpensive travel costs, and many of these folks go along with family. Once they get a thirst for international birding, they discover the productivity and economics of birding in Ecuador by themselves or with a small group. Ecuador has a number of inexpensive lodges for bird watchers, and these locations are a great base for birding the country through four key areas: northwest Ecuador, southern Ecuador, east slope of the Andes, and the Amazon Basin. What most bird watchers love about Ecuador is how productive birding can be: seeing 40 hummingbird species, 70 tanager species, as many as 10 trogons, usually 4 or 5 toucans and much, much more. Paz de las Aves is widely recognized as one of the top 10 birding sites in the world.

Charles will spend some time providing an overview of birding northwest Ecuador, eastern Ecuador and the Amazon Basin. He will reveal many of his favorite birding locations and share photographs of hundreds of Ecuadorian birds. You will learn a great deal about birding in Ecuador.

Monday, September 26

Climate and land use influence breeding success in

shortgrass prairie birds with Reesa Yale Conrey.



Mountain Plover Shading Nest
Photo Courtesy of RMBO

Reesa Yale Conrey is a wildlife biologist with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory in Fort Collins. Reesa directs mountain plover population research in western Nebraska and works with landowners to conserve plover nests on crop fields. Prior to joining RMBO this year, Reesa was a post-doctoral researcher at the U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center where she studied climate effects on prairie birds.

However, climate and land use are highly variable over space and time, creating pockets of high productivity as well as “good” and “bad” seasons for breeding success of prairie birds. Nest survival in most ground nesting shortgrass species is depressed by large rainfall events, but other responses to temperature and rainfall differ markedly by species. For example, plovers and owls, which prefer shorter vegetation structure, were much more successful in dryer weather, while lark buntings, which prefer taller vegetation, were more successful during wetter springs. Our wet spring and summer in 2011 has contributed to a halving of the plover nest success rate observed in 2010. Reesa’s objective with RMBO is to provide science-based recommendations about tillage, herbicides, and population goals for mountain plovers on private lands within the context of changing climate and differing responses of other shortgrass prairie birds.

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15pm; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00 AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30.** If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts.*

Field Trip Summaries for July 2011

Tuesday Birders

July 5, 2011 Stapleton Park – Selby's Feeder, Braille Trail

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Else van Erp, Mary Keithler. Observers: 35 (two groups). Time: 0830-1130. Distance: Miles by car 4, 3.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, ponderosa pine woodland, elevation 7200'-7600'. Weather: Sunny, 70-79°F, wind NW 0-5 mph. Totals: 33 species, 112 individuals.

July 5, 2011 Genesee Park

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Else van Erp, Mary Keithler (two groups). Observers: 34. Time: 1130-1330. Distance: Miles by car ?, .2 miles on foot. Habitat: Ponderosa pine woodland, elevation 7200'-7600'. Weather: Sunny to cloudy, 75-80° F, N wind 0-5 mph. Totals: 12 species, 37 individuals.

July 12, 2011 Witter Gulch

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Jonelle Verlaes. Observers: 24 (two groups). Time: 0900-1000. Distance: 1.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Lodgepole pine, open meadow, aspen grove, elevation 10,000'. Weather: Mostly cloudy, 46-58° F, variable wind, 5-15 mph. Totals: 11 species, 24 individuals.

July 12, 2011 Echo Lake/Mt. Goliath, Summit Lake

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Jonelle Verlaes. Observers: 24 (two groups). Time: 1000-1230. Distance: 1.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Lodgepole, spruce, aspen, bristlecone pine, small lake, open meadow, elevation 10,650'-12,600'. Weather: Mostly cloudy, 46-58° F, variable wind, 5-15 mph. Totals: 16 species, 90 individuals.

July 19, 2011 Silverthorne Hill

Leader(s): Mary Keithler, Will Burt. Observers: 6. Time: 0830-1300. Distance: 3.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Mixed forest area (spruce, fir, aspen, a few lodgepole), with cabins, houses, county roads, elevation 9200'. Weather: Mostly sunny, 60-70°F, variable wind. Totals: 22 species, 60 individuals.

July 19, 2011 Dillon, Town of

Leader(s): Ellie Jones, Patty Echelmeyer. Observers: 7. Time: 0830-1300. Distance: 2.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Residential, commercial, marina, park, lake; paved streets, homes; spruce, aspen, shrubs, ornamental plants (most lodgepole pines lost to beetle), elevation 9070'. Weather: Mostly sunny, 60-70°F, variable wind. Totals: 17 species, 79 individuals.

July 19, 2011 Dillon Valley (North Dillon)

Leader(s): Else Van Erp, Barbara Fay. Observers: 7. Time: 0830-1300. Distance: 2.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Residential, paved town streets, aspen, spruce, fir, ornamental plants; Straight Creek runs through district, elevation 8770'. Weather: Mostly sunny, 60-70°F, variable wind. Totals: 23 species, 145 individuals.

July 26, 2011 Alderfer / Three Sisters Jeffco Open Space Park

Leader(s): Ann Bonnell, Jonelle Balais, and Will Burt. Observers: 32 (three groups). Time: 0830-1300. Distance: 5.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, aspen woodland & grassy meadows, elevation 7680-8000'. Weather: Mostly cloudy, 70-75°F, northeast wind, 0-10 mph. Totals: 21 species, 95 individuals.

Field Trip Summaries for July 2011

Thursday July 7 Genesee Mountain Park, Jefferson

Drove car 6 miles and walked 0.5 miles with stops: from 7700 feet elevation at Exit 254 I-70 and up to Genesee Flagpole at 8284 feet. Sunny, hazy, and becoming cloudy with temps 60-72 degrees F. Time: 8:30 AM - 11:45 AM Total 29 Species and 147 Individuals. Cavity nesters feeding young or fledged include: Violet-Green Swallow, Western Bluebird, and House Wren. Other highlights: Williamson's Sapsucker, Red Crossbill, and Hermit Thrush heard singing.

Saturday July 9 Rocky Mountain National Park

Leader Bob Righter. Observers—John & Jean Alden, Bob and Kathy Andrini, Mary Burger, Joe & Corinne Bartell, Mike and Mary Blatchley, Joan Cox, Bob Craven, Gail Evans, Jack Falken, Pat Hoodley, Edie Israel, Walt & Linda Knudsen, Lynne Miller, Larry Modesitt, Christie Owens, Dick Pratt, Jim Petri, Rick & Connie Steinkamp, Mark Wallace, Bob Zilly. 27 Species, 105 individuals. 24 miles by car, .75 by foot. Partly cloudy, some rain, 40-72°. Highlights,, knee-wobbling views of the White -tailed Ptarmigan, and less than satisfying looks at the Brown-capped Rosy Finch.

Saturday, July 16, 2011 Woodpecker Field Trip - Sedalia to Cheesman

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee, Kirk and Kyle Huffstater. Observers: Jill Boice, Tom Bunker, Cheryl Chessick, Tom Halverstadt, Cyndy Johnson, Robert Martinez, Gwen Moore, Sharon Pfeifer, Dick Prickett, Bob Shade, Patrick Shaffner, Kiki Widjaja. Time: 06:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Distance: 68 miles driving; 2.5 miles on foot, Elevation: 5,860 feet at Sedalia to 7,500 feet in the Hayman Burn area, Habitat: Mixed Conifer forest, Aspen Grove, forest fire area, and riparian, Weather: clear to partly cloudy, humid, calm to slight breeze, 60 - mid 80s degrees 71 species (502 individuals). Trip Highlights: The highlights of the trip were that we found seven out of the eight targeted woodpecker species, and we found fledgling and active nests of various woodpeckers, a Hermit Thrush, swallows, bluebirds, and Bob Shade spotted a hummingbird female sitting on her nest.

Saturday, July 23, 2011 Wilderness On Wheels - Bailey to Kenosha Pass

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee and Niña Routh. Observers: Mark Amershek, Rick and Valerie Denny, Mary Geder, Peggy Hankins, Greg Lengsfeld, Bruce Neuman, Steve and Kathryn Smith, Toni Schmid. Time: 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Distance: 28 miles driving; 2.5 miles on foot, Elevation: 7,750 feet at Bailey to 10,001 feet at Kenosha Pass. Habitat: Mixed Conifer forest, Aspen Groves, lakes, and riparian. Weather: Clear to partly cloudy, calm to slight breeze, 70 to mid 80s degrees, 40 species, 208 individuals. Trip Highlights: The highlights of the trip were an unexpectedly wonderful Wilderness on Wheels (1 mile boardwalk) with its cool mountain riparian and forest birding, finding American Coots and Gadwalls with young on the Kenosha Pass Lake, especially the tiny red coot chicks, and 2 Great Blue Heron nestlings still in a nest at the Bailey Heron Rookery.

Sunday July 24 Golden Gate Canyon Park

Leader: Randy Lentz. Observers Mark Amershek, Bill Buttner, Laurie Chatena, Vicky Hamilton, Ed Holub, Barbara Hoover, Edie Israel, Kris Koff, Greg Lehgsteld, Robert Martinez, Bruce Neuman, Christopher Neuman, Kara Spitler, Kim Spitler. Habitats: Montane Riparian Shrubland, Ponderosa Pine/Douglas Fir, Lodgepole Pine. Weather: sunny, 50-85°. Species 35, individuals 173.

Saturday July 30 Mount Evans (Summit Lake, Echo Lake, Fillius Park)

Leader: Bob Shade. Observers: Bob Canter, Tim Smart, Kara Spitler, Robert Martinez, Lynne Miller, Walt & Linda Knudsen, Jeanne Howell. Species 25 individuals 141. Highlights: Brown-capped Rosy Finch, Wilson's Warblers.

No other reports were submitted.

So Sayeth the Speaker...

Bill Schmoker delighted a large DFO audience on 22 August 2011 with a presentation about his amazing opportunity to join a five-week 2010 Arctic Pelagic PolarTREC research trip aboard the 420-ft U.S. Coast Guard Icebreaker Healy. The Healy is the largest and newest ice breaker, a research vessel designed to conduct many research activities. The National Science Foundation funds the multi-year project and it is conducted in cooperation with Canada to map the sea floor and collect seabed samples. Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the continental shelf is defined as the stretch of the seabed adjacent to the shores of a particular country. Information from the cruise will help each country determine where they have rights over the natural resources of the seafloor, which include mineral resources, petroleum resources such as oil and gas, and animals like clams and crabs.

The project chooses a few science teachers to be connected with polar research, learn new science, help researchers, and for outreach purposes such as journaling and curriculum development. This was a very special opportunity for Bill because he has been teaching earth science for 17 years and he has been able to enrich his curriculum and that of other teachers with new information gained from this trip.

Bill boarded the Healy in Dutch Harbor, AK, and they traveled in the Bering and Chukchi Seas, north into the Arctic Ocean that includes the Beaufort Sea and Canada Basin at a latitudinal high point of 82.5°N, 139° W (over 800 miles north of Pt. Barrow, AK). Bill said the temperature was usually $\pm 32^{\circ}$ F with considerable fog, rain, and wind. Marine mammalogists and an American Native observer were on board to conduct mammal observations 24/7. The Healy always stayed 800 meters from mammals such as polar bears and whales. If they encountered mammals, they shut down the sonar. The crew detected 13 polar bears; Bill saw eight.

Goals of the program from <http://www.polar-trec.com/about>: “PolarTREC (Teachers and Researchers Exploring and Collaborating) is a program in which K-12 teachers spend 2-6 weeks participating in hands-on field research experiences in the polar regions. The goal of PolarTREC is to invigorate polar science education and understanding by bringing K-12 educators and polar researchers together. By fostering the integration of research and education, PolarTREC will continue the momentum established during the International Polar Year (IPY) by addressing the following program objectives:

- Improve teacher content knowledge of multidisciplinary polar science.
- Improve teacher instructional practices, especially the use of inquiry-based learning to translate polar science to the classroom.
- Improve polar researchers' understanding of and engagement in K-12 education to strengthen and enrich the outreach and dissemination of their research.
- Increase students' understanding of and engagement in the polar regions and interest in polar science, technology, engineering, or mathematics (STEM) careers.”

The cruise used two icebreakers to collect data to map the geology of the subseabed. The Canadian icebreaker Louis S. St-Laurent, however, broke down part way through the trip, so that limited some of the research capabilities of the voyage. There was a crew of 80 plus 35 scientists aboard the Healy. It is designed for science with many science labs, computer network, two helicopters, and three small boats. Scientists aboard the Healy also measured seafloor bathymetry, collected high-resolution subseafloor data, made ice observations, collected water samples, and monitored marine mammals and ocean noise through high frequency audio recording. The Healy sampled drilled sea floor cores, which are sliced in half lengthwise, refrigerated, photographed, tested, and sent to USGS laboratories. Bill was quite amazed at the variety of birds including Bank Swallows seen in the ocean so far north. He saw 11 bird species in the Beaufort Sea and seven species in the Canada Basin. Black-legged Kittiwakes were seen all the way to the north. He got nine life birds on the trip. Bill told the crew he was a birder—understatement!—and asked them to alert him any time they spotted a bird, which they did. He was not allowed to take his large cameras and lenses with him, but he still was able to treat us to some great bird and mammal photos as well as many photos and videos of the research being done on the Healy.

Kay Niyo

"Gift to a Great Organization"

An extra large **THANK YOU** to Bob Righter for his generous gift of \$1,500 to DFO. In his note accompanying the gift, Bob wrote, "The enclosed check is in appreciation for the DFO in getting me started in birding. It's a great organization." At the next DFO board meeting we will discuss how to use this donation. If anyone of the membership has ideas on special projects that could use support please let one of the board members know about it.

Welcome New Members!

Robert A. Backus, 4272 E Orchard Pl, Centennial, CO 80121, 303.781.1860

Harry Hall, 61 Golden Eagle Rd, Greenwood Village, CO 80121, 303.221.0048

Jim & Karen Schmoker, 1824 S Youngfield Pl, Lakewood, CO 80228, 303.888.9794

Farmland bird numbers in England fall to record low

Populations of breeding birds on farmland in England are at their lowest levels since formal attempts to monitor them began in 1966. The figures suggest overall populations have fallen by more than half in the past 44 years. Although the most recent annual decline of 5% might be down to a cold winter and recent changes to farming practice, experts believe the long-term



Photograph: Alamy

trends caused by continuing pressure on habitats mean most of the 19 species surveyed are in trouble. Figures for the last five years suggest a 10% decline and since the most recent ones are based on 2009 observations, the cold 2010 winter weather may bring further bad news next year.

The significant falls last year included kestrels (down 27%) lapwings (12%), grey partridge (23%), skylarks (5%) and starlings (20%). Relatively small percentage falls may still have huge impact because of low numbers in the first place. The figures for England are based on the [annual breeding birds survey by the British Trust for Ornithology](#), in which volunteers check 3,200 randomly selected 1km squares around the UK twice each year. But other data is included in the index published by [environment department Defra](#), which makes figures

for species decline slightly different. These figures are not yet online. Twelve of the 19 species monitored had falling populations. The 2009 index is the first since the European Union stopped ordering crop farmers not to use part of their land for agriculture, a measure first introduced in the 1990s to stop over-production but suspended because of high grain prices. Although UK farmers are still encouraged to seek subsidies to "green" their land through the UK's [entry](#) and [higher level environmental stewardship schemes](#), there are fears these may fall victim to the looming austerity cuts.

David Noble, a principal ecologist with the trust, said the latest index published by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), "shows that two-thirds of farmland bird species are continuing to decline, and although the latest drop may be in part due to a relatively harsh winter in 2008-09, there is certainly no evidence yet that (farming) initiatives such as environmental stewardship have succeeded in reversing national population declines." Mark Avery, director of conservation at the [RSPB](#), said: "It's difficult to draw any hard and fast conclusions from a short one-year time span, but this certainly makes for some depressing reading."

The winter before last had been "a moderately cold one" which could have impacted on birds' ability to find food. The loss of set-aside had also removed valuable foraging and nesting habitats for wild birds, he said.

"Lapwings ... are particularly vulnerable and their populations have been steadily falling for more than 30 years, so a decline of 12% in one year across England is really bad news."

Cuts in environmental stewardship could be "disastrous", he warned, even though some schemes were not working as well as they should. The charity is meeting government experts to discuss the problem tomorrow.

A Defra spokesman said: "We are looking into the reasons for this and working with farmers through environmental stewardship schemes that encourage them to do all they can to support birdlife on their farms."

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Chuck Hundertmark,
2546 Lake Meadow Dr. Lafayette, CO 80026
chundertmark8@gmail.com 303.604.0531

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Shade,
13861 W Dakota Ave, Lakewood, CO 80228
wrshade3@gmail.com 303.975.2476

TREASURER

Mary Geder,
13831 W Harvard Dr. Lakewood, CO 80228
mfg5000@live.com 303.986.6127

SECRETARY

Newell Grant,
1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood Village, CO
80121 nmgrantsr@aol.com 303.761.9967

DIRECTORS

Chris Blakeslee (2013) chrisabla@aol.com
John Drummond (2012) jxdrummo@aol.com
Tina Jones (2014) tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2014) kay@kayniyo.com
Ira Sanders (2014) greatauk@msn.com
Connie Steinkamp (2012) ricconcal@comcast.net
Lynn Willcockson (2014) lynnliz2698@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place,
Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Oct-11 Chris Owens christieowens2@me.com
Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21,
Elizabeth, CO 80107. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532,
veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421,
email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact
person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email
d_d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750
Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor
Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2012 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st. If more convenient, you can pay for more than one year, just make sure you make a note of that when you submit your payment.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic (legible) *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



- ◇ Monday September 26—Climate and land use influence breeding success in shortgrass prairie birds with Reesa Yale Conrey.
- ◇ Monday October 24—Birding Tourism with Charles Thornton-Kolbe





Denver Field Ornithologists

The Lark Bunting

NOVEMBER 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 11

Birding in Ecuador—with Charles Thornton-Kolbe Monday October 24, 7.30pm



Black Chinned Mountain Tanager,
Photo by John Drummond

Many Colorado birders know that Charles Thornton-Kolbe also served on the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO) Board for about five years and has served as the President of the DFO. Charles also served as the Coordinator for Audubon's Adopt-an-Important Bird Area Project for the Pawnee National Grasslands, and he is also an occasional compiler for the Colorado Rare Bird Alert.

Charles Thornton-Kolbe has been involved in managing, developing and occasionally participating in birding tourism for seven years. He is currently the Executive Partner of the Partnership for International Birding, a bird watching ecotourism firm providing over sixty birding trips worldwide each year, with a concentration of trips in South

Continued on page 3



November Field Trips

Saturday, November 5 Southwest Denver Lakes

Leader: Lynn Willcockson, 303-757-7000. Meet leader at 8:30am at Belmar Historic Park in Lakewood. Belmar Park is at 800 S Wadsworth Blvd at W Ohio Ave. From Wadsworth and Ohio turn west on Ohio Ave and go 2 blocks straight into Irongate parking lot. Will carpool from that location. Will be looking for varieties of waterfowl in several SW Denver lakes. Bring water, snacks, scopes. Birding will continue until approximately 12 PM. **Please call leader if planning to attend.**

Sunday, November 6 Mountain Lakes – Scoter Trip

Leader: Joey Kellner 303-978-1748. This is an all day trip driving to various mountain lakes to look for scoters, loons and other migrants, so bring lunch. Trip will probably include stops at Dillon Reservoir, Turquoise Lake, Spinney Mountain Reservoir, Twin Lakes and Eleven-Mile Reservoir. **Call leader to register and arrange a meeting place.** State Parks pass required. Also bring lunch, water, scopes and radios if you have them. **Be aware. DST ends. Please remember to push back your clocks the night before this trip. You don't want to oversleep—the scoters are waiting for you.**

Saturday November 12 Cherry Creek State Park

Leader: Steve Kennedy - stevenlkennedy@mac.com 303-815-9738 Meet leader at 8AM at the marina on the west side of the park. Marina is inside the park's west entrance. Entrance is across from Cherry Creek HS. From Bellevue and Yosemite go east on Bellevue to the park entrance. Cherry Creek in November is full of feathered surprises from gulls to grebes to loons to....This is a half day trip. Bring scopes if you have them and good walking shoes.

Sunday, November 13 Longmont and Northeast Plains

Leader: Chris Owens – christiel@q.com 303-772-6048 This is a full day trip. Meet at Jim Hamm Park at 7:30 AM From I-25 take Exit 240. To reach the park, go west four miles on CO 119 to Boulder-Weld County Line Road, then

Continued on next page

November Field Trips, continued

north two miles to Jim Hamm Park at 17th Ave. Itinerary will be decided on the day of trip. Raptors to be the highlight. Bring lunch, water, scopes, appropriate clothing to the weather as it is highly variable, radios. Birding until late afternoon, possibly 4:30 or 5pm.

Thursday, November 17 Winter Birding in Jefferson County

Leader: Charles Thornton-Kolbe. We will visit three Jefferson County birding spots which have been traditionally good for a few rarities and/or just a good time for winter birding. We will mix up the habitats to assure a good winter birding day and spend about 1 to 3 hours at each destination. Drive times will be about ½ hour between sites with some birding thrown in along the way. We hope will have a quick start at Prospect Lake (enjoying a number of winter ducks and maybe a few surprises). Then, we will take a short drive up to Red Rocks for bit of enjoyment (maybe snow will bring back the Rosy-Finches) at the bird feeders there, and then we will likely take a short birding walk in the area. We will then head towards higher mountain areas (maybe Look Out Mountain) and enjoy Pygmy-Nuthatches and more there. We will then go back to Prospect Lake for a longer walk along the Jefferson County Greenway. We may turn up a few or no winter surprises, but we will have a good day of birding. The trip will wrap up at about 2:15pm back at Prospect Lake, but you can feel free to bird longer there and/or bird other nearby locations.

Start at 6:45am meet at Prospect Lake in Wheat Ridge. From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about three quarters of a mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go one mile west. Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Feel free to come a few minutes early and get a good look at the ducks, and maybe you can turn up a Barrow's Goldeneye or another surprise. Bring: Layers of clothing and coats (including rain gear), binoculars, scope (if you have one), lunch, snack, beverages. Please bring a sack lunch, as we will bird until about 2:15pm. Cost for Trip - shared gasoline cost (per DFO traditions 30 cents per mile divided by number of folks in the car). Likely about \$3 to \$5 here. No need to RSVP – just come, regardless of weather.

Sunday, November 20 Boulder Area

Leader: Chishun Kwong chishunkwong@yahoo.com Meet leader at 8am at the Boulder Open Space and Mountain Parks office parking lot. Office is located at 66 Cherryvale Rd in Boulder. Cherryvale Rd is a N-S road about a mile east of Foothills Parkway in Boulder. Office is just N of South Boulder Rd on Cherryvale. Join us as we visit various bodies of water in Boulder County looking for waterfowl and any lingering landbirds. Possible scoters, long tailed ducks and more. This is a half day trip ending around noon.

Saturday, November 26 Pueblo Reservoir

Leaders: Ira and Tammy Sanders. Meet leaders at 6am in the Safeway parking lot at the intersection of E Lincoln Ave and S Yosemite St in Lone Tree (about 1 ½ mi W of I-25 on E Lincoln). According to Birding Magazine, Pueblo Reservoir is among the top 10 inland gull sites in the US. Also, according to Christmas Bird Count data, Pueblo Reservoir often claims the world's largest wintering population of Mountain Bluebirds. Join us for a great day of birding. This is an all day trip. Bring State parks pass, lunch, water, scopes.

Sunday, November 27 Boulder Area

Leader: Ted Floyd. The FIRST ANNUAL GREAT BOULDER CAPER, cosponsored by the American Birding Association. Meeting time is 7am. TENTATIVE meeting location is the main Cottonwood Marsh parking lot at Walden Ponds, off 75th Street. HOWEVER, this location is subject to change. The trip leader will e-mail you if the location changes. Bring snacks, water, and warm clothes.

- ◇ RSVP BY E-MAIL ONLY REQUIRED. E-mail Ted Floyd (tedfloyd57@hotmail.com) to participate in this field trip. We will visit various sites in Boulder County. Our itinerary will be dictated by weather and other conditions. CARPOOLING STRONGLY URGED. (Drivers of single-occupant vehicles will be ridiculed and humiliated throughout the day.) Although this is a full-day trip, there will be opportunities to bail out at several points during the day.

Compiled by Mary Geder mfg5000@live.com

Meeting Presentations, continued

America. “Ecuador and South American are our second home for birding tourism”, said Mr. Thornton-Kolbe. Ecuador is by far the most popular destination for bird watchers, who have fallen in love with international birding. Many birders wander to Costa Rica or Mexico due to inexpensive travel costs, and many of these folks go along with family. Once they get a thirst for international birding, they discover the productivity and economics of birding in Ecuador by themselves or with a small group. Ecuador has a number of inexpensive lodges for bird watchers, and these locations are a great base for birding the country through four key areas: northwest Ecuador, southern Ecuador, east slope of the Andes, and the Amazon Basin. What most bird watchers love about Ecuador is how productive birding can be: seeing 40 hummingbird species, 70 tanager species, as many as 10 trogons, usually 4 or 5 toucans and much, much more. Paz de las Aves is widely recognized as one of the top 10 birding sites in the world.

Charles will spend some time providing an overview of birding northwest Ecuador, eastern Ecuador and the Amazon Basin. He will reveal many of his favorite birding locations and share photographs of hundreds of Ecuadorian birds. You will learn a great deal about birding in Ecuador.

Our November 28 Presentation features the Birds of Colombia with John Drummond. More details in next month's Lark Bunting, and on the DFO web site. Next meeting will be January—no meeting in December.

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15pm; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00pm AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30pm.** If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts.*

Nota Bene:

John Vanderpoel, a Colorado birder, is doing a Big Year. Follow his quest on www.bigyear2011.com. He is currently at 726 birds.

The Big Year is an upcoming comedy film starring Owen Wilson and Steve Martin. *The Big Year* is directed by David Frankel and written by Howard Franklin. The film is based on the book *The Big Year: A Tale of Man, Nature and Fowl Obsession* which was written by local Colorado birder/writer Mark Obmascik. The film is to be released on October 14, 2011, in the United States.

We acknowledge, with sadness, the passing of Myron Plooster, a long-time member of the Boulder Birding Club, and the DFO. Recently his wife Suzi, received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the CFO for her contribution to the Colorado birding community. Our congratulations to you Suzi.

Field Trip Summary Narratives for August 2011

August 6 South Platte River, Central Area.

Leader, Jackie King, Observers Jean Davis, Sky Yarborough. Time 7am – 10am, Elevation 5280ft. Habitat riparian. Distance (By Car) 1.5. Weather sunny and hot, temperature 70-84° Totals: 20 species, 195 individuals. Highlights: We got great looks at the birds and were surprised at how many Lark Sparrows were there—I did not expect to see them near the river like that but there were a bunch just under the Ferris wheel at Elitch Gardens. The pelicans were beautiful as well, they were flying over in their slow, majestic formation with their white wings flashing in the sky.

August 7 Rocky Mountain National Park

Leader, Ed Holub, Observers Jeanne Howell, Bruce Newman, Ashley Thompson, Nancy Todd. Time 8am – 4.15pm. Elevation 5280ft. Habitats: Mountain forest and meadows, streams, marsh. Distance (car 23.8), (on foot 2.5) Weather clear to partly cloudy, temperature 50-80° Totals: 37 species, 129 individuals.

August 13 Lair O' the Bear Park, Jefferson, US-CO

Leaders - Ira Sanders, Tammy Sanders. Observers - Mark Amershek, Kate Brannan, Jacques Chartier, Donna Emmons, Edie Israel, Linda Knudsen, Walt Knudsen, Marian McNamee, Dick Prickett. Riparian and Pine Forest 7:00 AM - 12:00 PM, Protocol: Traveling 3.0 mile(s) on foot 3 species 239 birds

August 14 Barr Lake State Park

Leader: Dick Schlotter, Observers: Mark Amershek, Cheryl Chesick, Chris Goulart, Christy Honnen, Mary Keither, Lynne Miller, Bruce Neuman, Joann Pettinicchio, Sharon Pfeifer, Jean Steven son, Jeff Stroup, Mark Wallace. Birded from 0700-1130. Weather mostly clear, calm 65-85°. Distance, 3 miles on foot. Total species 42, individuals 380.

August 20 Cherry Creek State Park

Leaders: Chris Blakeslee, Mary Cay Burger, Observers: Mark Amershek, Joan Coxe, Georgia Dorr, Peggy Gonder, Harry Hall, Ed Holub, Pauline Ide, Mary Keithler, Paul and Jake Langendorfer, Laura Lukitsch, Colleen Marley, Sue Schulman Total group = 15 birders. Time: 07:00 a.m. – Noon. Distance: 5 miles driving; 2 miles on foot. Elevation: 5,550 feet, Habitat: Mixed riparian, open water, and grassland, Weather: Clear, Calm to Slight Breeze, 57 - low 80s degrees (F). 42 species (593 individuals): Trip Highlights: The highlights of the trip were finding a very active flock of Cedar Waxwings including many juveniles and a good-sized flock of migrating Yellow-headed Blackbirds. The water level was so high that there were virtually no shorebirds, but that was a LOW light of the trip of course.

August 21 Roxborough State Park

Leader: Doris Cruze. Observers: Deb Armer, Jerry Cech, Laurie Chotena, Nancy Crews, Christy Honnen, Jennifer Larson, Joann Pettinicchio, Lori Sharp, Susan Smith, Peggy Wait, Diana Wilson, Dennis Wojcicki. Time 7:30 a.m. to 11:00am. Weather: High Clouds, Sunny 66 to 78 degrees F Winds: S, SW 10 - 20 mph early; S, SE 5 - 10 mph later. Total Species: 29 Individuals 124. Highlights: Hummingbirds, Chickadees, and finches in a small field of sunflowers. Mammals seen: Rock Squirrels, Mule Deer, and a black bear up close.

August 27 Rigli Ranch

Leader Joe Rigli, observers, March Amershek, Nancy Hawkins, Greg Lengersfeld, Bob Montgomery, Bruce Newman, Jeff Stroup, Peter Walker. Time: 925am – 2pm. Habitat, sandhill sagebrush, grasslands, short-grass prairie, riparian woodlands, ponds fields and farmlands. Weather: 77° clear, calm warm, sunny in am, 95° clear, calm partly cloudy, sunny, hot in pm. Elevation 4,430. Distance 10 miles by car, 1 on foot. Totals: 41 species, 203 individuals. Highlights Two male mallards in eclipse plumage, one blue-winged teal in eclipse plumage, sex unknown, one Northern bobwhite one burrowing owl, two empidonax flycatchers, more details in the summary table.

August 27 Belmar Historic Park

Leader Karleen Schofield. Observers: Patty Echelmeyer, Dean Hill. Time: 9am – 11.40. Habitat: grassland, man-made lake and pond, riparian, wetland. Distance ¾ mile on foot. Sunny and hot. 84-94° Totals: 25 individuals, 143 species.

Field Trip Summary Narratives for August 2011, continued

August 28 Jackson Reservoir, Morgan, US-CO

Leader: Chris Owens and Jim Petri. 8:28 am- 10:20am. Protocol: Traveling 1.0 mile(s) 18 species, Prewitt Reservoir, Washington, 11:20am - 2:40pm. Protocol: Traveling 3.5 mile(s) 36 species (+1 other taxa)

August 28 Wheat Ridge Green Belt

Leader: Patty Echelmeyer, Observers: Mark Amershek, Joan Cox, Donna Cross, Jean Davis, Andrew De Sousa, Rena Fowler, Monna Krebs. Time: 8am-11.00. Distance 1 ½ on foot. Clear, 70-80° Totals: 28 species, 21 individuals. Highlights: McGillivray's Warbler, not seen by all.

Tuesday Birders

August 2 Upper White Ranch Jeffco Open Space Park (UPP)

Leaders: Ann Bonnell, Mary Keithler, Else Van Erp. Observers: 27 (three groups). Time: 0830-1230. Distance: 5.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Ponderosa pine, woodlands and mixed grassy meadows, elevation 5675'. Weather: Partly/mostly cloudy, 72-76°F, east wind, 0-7 mph. Totals: 32 species, 172 individuals.

August 9 Mount Evans Elk Management Wildlife Area.

Leaders: Ann Bonnell. Else Van Erp Observers: 32 (two groups).. Time: 0900-1230. Distance: 2.6 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, ponderosa pine, Douglas fir, spruce and aspen, elevation 8300-8600, mostly sunny, 78-82 degrees, Wind NW 0-6 mph. Totals: 23 species, 112 individuals.

August 16 Upper Maxwell Falls

Leader: Ann Bonnell. Observers: 25. Time: 0900-1230. Distance: 2.25 miles on foot. Habitat: Riparian, mixed coniferous forest, aspen, Englemann spruce, Douglas fir, Blue spruce, Lodgepole pine, possibly Ponderosa, elevation 7900-8300'. Weather: Sunny to raining, 68-72°F, calm. Totals: 18 species, 92 individuals; American Three-toed Woodpecker a highlight.

August 23 O'Fallon Park, Denver Mountain Parks (OFA)

Leaders: Ann Bonnell, Else van Erp, Mary Keithler. Observers: 34 (three groups). Time: 0830-1200. Distance: 3.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Ponderosa pine, open woodland, riparian, mixed conifers, aspen, elevation 6800-7200'. Weather: Sunny to partly cloudy, 66-82°F, N wind 3-7 mph. Totals: 25 species, 159 individuals.

August 30 Timnath Reservoir (Weld County)

Leader: Ann Bonnell, Mary Keithler. Observers: 16. Time: 0900-1100. Distance: 1.0 miles on foot. Habitat: Reservoir, open water, shoreline, cottonwood, willows, grassland, meadows, rural, elevation 4911'. Weather: Sunny, 75-82°F, calm. Totals: 19 species, 2232 individuals.

August 30 Fossil Creek Reservoir (Larimer County)

Leader: Ann Bonnell. Observers: 16. Time: 1115-1215. Distance: 1.5 miles on foot. Habitat: Reservoir, open water, shoreline, cottonwood, grassland/prairie, marsh, elevation 4864'. Weather: Mostly sunny, 82-85°F, wind SSE 4-9 mph. Totals: 12 species, 401 individuals.

Welcome New Members!

Edward T Donnan, 13950 E Oxford Pl #B302, Aurora, CO 80014, 303.898.4607
Donna Emmons, 4901 W 93rd Ave #2431, Westminster, CO 80031, 719.369.9704
Harry Hall, 61 Golden Eagle Rd, Greenwood Village, CO 80121, 303.221.0048
Tammy VerCauteren, PO Box 899, LaPorte, CO 80535, 970.482.0865

Thank you for donation to the DFO Endowment Fund: Robert Backus, Edward Donnan, and Peggy Gonder

So Sayeth the Speaker...

Reesa Yale Conrey, currently a wildlife biologist with the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory (RMBO) in Fort Collins, presented an interesting program to DFO members on 26 September 2011. Her topic was how climate and land use influence breeding success in shortgrass prairie birds. She joined RMBO this year after completing a postdoctoral study with the U.S. Geological Survey, Fort Collins Science Center where she investigated climate effects on prairie birds in the Pawnee National Grasslands of northeastern Colorado. She completed her Ph.D. dissertation in ecology in May 2010 at Colorado State University, after studying the habits and ecology of burrowing owls nesting in black-tailed prairie dog burrows in Colorado. Her dissertation research addressed the effects of rainfall and plague on breeding owls of the Pawnee National Grassland.

Cast of Characters

In her presentation to DFO, Reesa addressed the effects of climate and land use on shortgrass prairie birds and the future success of these systems. The main cast of bird species is familiar to most Colorado birders: Mountain Plover, Burrowing Owl, Horned Lark, McCown's Longspur, Chestnut-collared Longspur, Lark Bunting, and Western Meadowlark.

The Burrowing Owls and Mountain Plovers historically and effectively use prairie dog towns where the prairie dogs forage on the vegetation and keep it extremely short. The Burrowing Owls use empty prairie dog burrows for their nests and the Mountain Plovers merely make a slight scrap in the soil in which to lay usually three eggs. Both species' nesting success is best in years when it is warm and dry, rather than cold and wet. Both of these species require excellent visibility to protect nests from various predators and to better spot and forage for dryland insect prey. Mountain Plover chicks are precocial and leave the nest soon after hatching, whereas Burrowing Owlets need at least 35 days of care before flying. The passerines nest in longer vegetation and their nesting success is increased in cool and wet years when there is more cover and increased numbers of the proper insects and seeds for their young. They enjoy less heat stress and fewer predators in this slightly different grassland ecological niche.

Warming Climate

The climate at present is warmer with more extreme precipitation events. This causes larger storms and longer droughts. Species must move or adapt. Many grasslands exposed to these harsh events are already declining, which means less habitat for the shortgrass wildlife species.

Land Use

As Reesa emphasized, prairie dog towns are important for the Burrowing Owl, and the owl abandons the town after the prairie dogs are infected with and die from the plague. When the prairie dogs are not on site to keep the grass cropped, the Mountain Plover abandons the site also. Nests of all the shortgrass bird species are less dense on native prairie and cropland.

Reesa currently directs RMBO Mountain Plover population research with numerous partners in western Nebraska (mainly in Kimball Co.), and works with landowners to conserve plover nests on crop fields. Such research in Nebraska has been ongoing since 2001. In 2006, the researchers began paying farmers \$100 per each nest that the researchers found in which one Mountain Plover chick survived on the tilled land. The nest was flagged and the farmer avoided destroying it. Mountain Plover nest success rate was 80% in 2006. In 2007, the researchers paid the farmer \$200 when the *farmer* found the nest and one chick survived, and the nesting success rate was 82%. Success rate decreased in later years due to less funding and a very cool spring and summer in 2011. This research, however, has helped to demonstrate the potential for successful Mountain Plover reproduction on agricultural lands. Rates of plover nest success on Nebraska crop fields have been higher than most estimates in other habitat types. Landowner efforts in locating nests and preserving them from tillage are key to plover success in crop fields.

Future

Reesa's current objective with RMBO is to provide science-based recommendations about tillage, herbicides, and population goals for Mountain Plovers on private lands within the context of changing climate and differing responses of other shortgrass prairie birds. She hopes to continue the incentive payments to farmers if available and if needed.

Kay Niyo

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Chuck Hundertmark,
2546 Lake Meadow Dr. Lafayette, CO 80026
chundertmark8@gmail.com 303.604.0531

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Shade,
13861 W Dakota Ave, Lakewood, CO 80228
wrshade3@gmail.com 303.975.2476

TREASURER

Mary Geder,
13831 W Harvard Dr. Lakewood, CO 80228
mfg5000@live.com 303.986.6127

SECRETARY

Newell Grant,
1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood Village, CO
80121 nmgrantsr@aol.com 303.761.9967

DIRECTORS

Chris Blakeslee (2013) chrisabla@aol.com
John Drummond (2012) jxdrummo@aol.com
Tina Jones (2014) tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2014) kay@kayniyo.com
Ira Sanders (2014) greatauk@msn.com
Connie Steinkamp (2012) ricconcal@comcast.net
Lynn Willcockson (2014) lynnliz2698@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place,
Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Mar-11 Alison Kondler , 303.904.9140
Apr-11 Carol Blackard 303.740.6072
May-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Jun-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Jul-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580
Aug-11 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Sep-11 Alison Kondler, 303.904.9140
Oct-11 Chris Owens christieowens2@me.com
Nov-11 Mary Geder, 303.986.6127
Dec-11 Jill Boice, 303.863.7580

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21,
Elizabeth, CO 80107. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532,
veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421,
email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact
person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email
d_d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2012 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st. If more convenient, you can pay for more than one year, just make sure you make a note of that when you submit your payment.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

☐ Contribution to the DFO Educational Endowment Fund \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic (legible) Lark Bunting Email address:

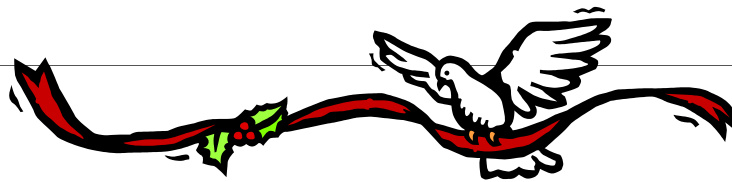
Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742



- ◇ Monday October 24— Birding in Ecuador
with Charles Thornton-Kolbe
- ◇ Monday November 28—Birds of Colombia
with John Drummond





The Lark Bunting

DECEMBER 2011

www.dfobirders.org

Volume 47, Number 12

The Birds of Colombia with John Drummond

Monday November 28

Colombia has recently opened up to eco tourism and Pro Aves, the Colombian bird conservation organization, has been instrumental in purchasing land, building lodges to protect the many endangered endemic species and habitat types. Colombia possesses the highest number of bird species in the world, over 1870 at the latest count. This presentation describes a trip made in April 2010 to visit the endemic rich areas around the central Cauca and Magdalena valleys and the isolated Santa Marta Mountains on the Caribbean coast. The wide variety of habitat types of humid cloud forest, paramo, dry forest, marshes and desert scrub that we visited made for exciting birding, particularly colorful hummingbirds and psittacidae of which you will see plenty in John's presentation.

John Drummond started birding as a teenager in England in the RSPB (Royal Society for the Protection of Birds). His job as a petroleum researcher and quality control



Continued on page 3



December Field Trips

Saturday, December 3

Cherry Creek State Park

Leader: Mary Cay Burger, 303-771-3431. At 8:30am come to the **EAST GATE** of Cherry Creek Park, which is a right hand turn off Parker Road, just south of I-225. From there, you will get further directions to the first stop for the group. Generally, group will bird from east to west, to take advantage of morning sun on your back. Leader knows Cherry Creek very well and will take us to locations where interesting birds have been occurring. Eagles will probably be on the reservoir. Must have state parks pass and "water" sticker to enter. Bird until noon or 1pm. Lunch optional.

Sunday, December 4

Barr Lake SP-North Side

Leader: Chuck Hundertmark, 303-604-0531. Meet leader at 8.30am in parking lot at the south end of Lark Bunting Lane. **(Note: This is not the usual Barr Lake SP meeting place.)** From the Bromley Lane/E 152nd Ave. exit of I-76, drive east on E 152nd Ave. across the railroad tracks and take an immediate right onto Lark Bunting Lane. State Park pass or admission fee required. We'll bird the area around RMBO's headquarters and the fields and ditches below the Barr Lake dam. Recent CBCs have found Winter Wren and Wilson's Snipe in the area. Raptors and a variety of sparrows are likely. Bring water, snacks, and binoculars. Scopes optional. Half day trip. Call or email leader if you plan to attend. chundertmark8@gmail.com.

Saturday, December 10th Wheat Ridge Greenbelt.

Leader: Paul Slingsby 303-422-3728. Please notify the leader if you plan to attend. Meet the leader at 8:00am at Prospect Park in Wheat Ridge. From I-70 exit 267, take Kipling south about 3/4 of a mile and turn right (west) on 44th Avenue. Go one mile west. Look for the entrance to Prospect Park on your left (south). Park in the lot near Clear Creek. We'll bird along Clear Creek and visit Tabor Lake. Our walk will also include the dirt paths in the wetland south of the creek and may involve about 3 miles of walking. Telescope and radio are not necessary but you may want a telescope for the lakes only. We will finish by 1pm. Lunch with the leader at a warm restaurant is optional.

Sunday, December 11

Chatfield State Park

Leader: Lee Farrell 303-932-7859 Contact leader at lee_farrel.comcast.net to register (limit 12 individuals) Meet 8:00am at

Continued on next page

December Field Trips, continued

Platte Parking lot, located just southeast of Kingfisher Bridge over the South Platte River (south of the Main reservoir). Must have State Parks pass or pay admission fee to bring in your car.

A 3 to 4 hour hike along the east side of the South Platte River, to visit habitat to be lost or impacted under the currently proposed Chatfield Reservoir Expansion. We'll look for ducks at the gravel ponds and other species wintering over in the area. Approximately a 4-mile hike over unmaintained trails, attendees should be comfortable hiking similar distances. Wear hiking boots, bring water and snacks.

Check out the Christmas Count options on Page 7 and the 2011 Urban Count on January 1 on page 6.

So Sayeth the Speaker...

Charles Thornton-Kolbe, from the Partnership for International Birding, spoke to DFO about the phenomenal birding possibilities in Ecuador.

One of the many stories he told was of a birder who hired a guide to do a BIG MONTH in Ecuador. They saw 996 species in an area about the size of Colorado in one month. The guide saw 1000 bird species! He also mentioned the huge feeding flocks throughout Ecuador, ranging from 10 species to those with 40 plus species. Here is where a good guide really helps to sort out quickly and identify the species.

Chuck says there are 5 key trips for birding in Ecuador. First, he spoke of **Northwest Ecuador** where you can get enjoy huge feeding flocks of various species, numerous hummingbirds, tanagers and more. You can get 60 to 80 species of tanagers, 3-4 species of toucans/aracari, and also several quetzals/trogons. Around the lodge feeders and along several trails, you will likely see 35-40 species of hummingbirds in a week. Antpitta species used to be difficult to see and were considered rare, but with feeding via live works at several locations they can be found reliably. You can tell Chuck is a trained economist when he sites these trips as a real value at just about \$2,000 with most trips in NW Ecuador seeing 310-350 species in 8-10 days. The trips also have easy access; Ecuador has a stable government and is safe for birders. NW Ecuador trips benefit from inexpensive lodges, short driving distances, and the possibility to go birding any time of year.

He also offered the following advice for seeing the greatest number of species. 1) Hire a good, local guide. 2) Prepare and study in advance. 3) Get help planning the trip so you can focus on the most productive sites.

In **Eastern Ecuador**, Chuck explained the roads are better, the drives are longer and the lodges are nicer and more expensive. To avoid the rain, you should go from September to March. You will can start birding about one hour east of Quito, but then you drive as far as 4-5 hours east of Quito and up& over the Andes. You start with birding at (about 13,000 feet at Pappalachta Pass where you can bird the high mountain grasslands and lakes. You then head towards Guango reserve, San Isidro for more excellent hummingbird feeders, private trails through forested areas. Then you can bird the national park surrounding Wild Sumaco with excellent grounds and hummingbird feeders.

In the **Amazon Basin**, you will enjoy birding from trails through the rainforest, from towers, and from the canoe and boatss. There is more nocturnal birding and wildlife here. Charles spoke of the special story of the Sani Lodge. Here they exchanged the building of the eco-lodge for the right of the oil companies to build an oil pipeline through the area. This way, they eliminated the need for oil drilling in their rain forest and expanded income from eco-tourism. It is possible to see 150-200 species (additional to other parts of Ecuador) in 4 days.

Charles touched briefly on two other areas of Ecuador eco-tourism and birding, realizing more time was needed to present adequate information on these areas.

- * The **Galapagos Islands** is a tremendous overall nature trip. Do not go only for the birds. There are 33 endemics and total bird species is only about 50.
- * In **Southern Ecuador**, you might see 400-450 bird species in 12-18 days, including several endemics and regional endemics shared with Peru.

Overall Ecuador is a prime birding destination in that it gives you more bird species/day. More "bang for your buck". Chuck showed excellent photos and convinced us all that we should go someday.

Meeting Presentations, continued

expert (PhD in inorganic chemistry) sent him to places like Singapore, Japan, and New Zealand. He moved to the US in 1987 and has been quite active in breeding bird surveys, international and local birding tour guiding, and is a board member of DFO and a member of the Colorado Rare Bird Committee. He probably knows as much or more about North American birds than most American birders and is thoroughly at home in Colorado. He has birded on six continents and has a world life list of around 6,700 species! He has seen birds in all 48 lower US states and in 40 different countries."

Brazil Birds – January 23

Bill Eden and Bill Turner will transport you to the Brazil's Christalino River and its rainforest habitat, then to the largest freshwater wetlands in the world – the Pantanal. Brazil is the fourth largest country in landmass and one of the most biodiverse.



Bill Eden's photographs will feature a sample of the 1,800 species of birds found in Brazil such as the endangered Hyacinth Macaw, the Jabiru, Sunbittern and Green Ibis as well as a few mammals including the Brazilian Tapir, Giant River Otter and Crab-eating Fox.

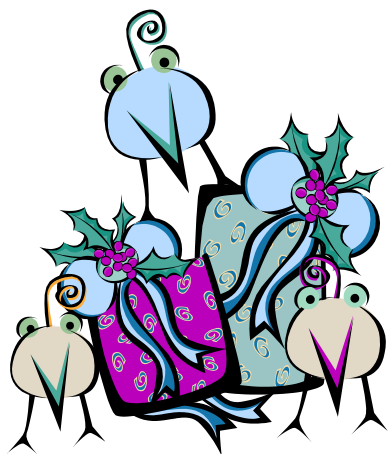
This 2010 Brazil trip was developed by Bill Turner's company *Tours By Turner*. Bill Turner also leads trips to Belize, Australia, Costa Rica and other locations.

Bill Eden enjoys photographing birds in the United States and internationally. His pursuit of birding and photographing birds, linked with a passion to travel, has taken him to counties in Central and South America, Africa and "Down Under". Bill is a past DFO Board member and

currently helps coordinate the Audubon Society of Greater Denver's (ASGD) Master Birder Program.

Bill Turner has worked as the Curator of Reptiles at the LA Zoo and then as Director of Education at the Denver Zoo. Bill's favorite destination is Australia where he has led two dozen trips. Bill Turner is a DFO and ASGD member and enjoys birding with the Tuesday Birders.

*The Denver Field Ornithologists monthly meetings are held in Ricketson Auditorium at the Denver Museum of Nature and Science in City Park. These meetings are free and open to the public and occur on the 4th Monday of each month August through April (except December). Park on the north side of the Museum and walk around and enter through the Museum's west doors. Plan to arrive by 7:15pm; **DOORS OPEN BY 7:00pm AND ARE LOCKED AT 7:30pm**. If late, you can enter through the security/volunteer entrance on the north side of the building, but this does create problems for our hosts.*



Welcome New Members!

Jonelle Balais, 595 Aspen Pl, Evergreen, CO 80439
 George & Jayne James, 5530 E 17th Ave, Denver, CO 80220, 303.321.7180
 Joe Margoshes, 7624 E 7th Ave, Denver CO 80230, 303.341.8288
 Lori Sharp, 8405 S Moore St, Littleton, CO 80127, 303.979.5465
 Laurel Starr, 697 Somerset Dr, Golden, CO 80401, 303.271.1089
 Bobbi Vollmer, 3333 E Florida Ave., #88, Denver, CO 80210, 303.756.4110

Thank you for your donation to the DFO Endowment Fund: Monna Krebs, Joe Margoshes, David Hill, Lori Sharp, Ted & Nancy Pinkert.

Fall Count Summary Narratives for September 2011

September 10, Saturday*Cherry Creek Reservoir*

Duration: 12 hour(s), Distance: 10.0 mile(s) Leaders: Cheryl Teuton, Dan Brooke, Observers: Joe Roller, Mary Keithler, Patti Galli, Diane Hutton, Pauline Ide, and Benny and Lanny Mullis. Temp ranged from 50-75 degrees, winds were calm all day, mostly sunny. Miles reported are those on foot (measured by calibrated pedometer), 27 total miles were also driven, but essentially all birding was on foot. Totals: 72 species, 1165 individuals. Highlight: Jaeger was photographed and reported to state RBA.

September 10, Saturday*Waterton*

Leaders: Urling & Hugh Kingery. Observers: Angie Barnes, Marsha Heron, Leann Joswick, Linda & Walt Knudson, Tom Schlosser, Mike Serruto. Time: 0600-1600. Distance: 5 miles on foot, 10 miles by car. Habitat: Riparian, grassland, reservoir. Weather: Clear. Totals: 60 species, 553 individuals

September 10, Saturday*Chatfield State Park*

Leader - Kellner, Joey. Observers: Paul Differding, Ed Holub, Randy Lentz, Steve Stachowiak, Connie and Rick Steinkamp, Glenn Walbek. Distance by car 39 miles, by foot 7 miles. Weather: mostly clear 43-77°. Totals 89 species, 1256 individuals.

September 10, Saturday*Lower Bear Creek/Marston Reservoir*

Lower Bear Creek includes Bear Creek Lake Park and Bear Creek Greenbelt. Marston Reservoir includes the drive around Marston Lake plus the feeders at Tina Jones. Count Compiler and Leader: Mike Henwood. Observers: Chuck Aid, Mark Amershek, Bob Andrews, Rick Creswell, Jim Duggan, Celia Greenman, Michael Kiessig (AM only), Michele Ostrander (AM only), Dick Prickett, Rob Raker (Marston only), Toni Rautus, Nina Routh, Bob Santangelo (AM only), Paul Slingsby, Tim Smart (Marston only), Karen von Saltza, Scott Yarberry. Time: Met at 6:30 a.m. Finished around 5 pm. Took hour for lunch. Weather: Mostly sunny; 55-70° in the am; 70-80° in the afternoon. Lower Bear Creek species 64, 935 individuals. Marston Reservoir, 46 species, 417 individuals.

September 11, Sunday*Barr Lake Periphery*

Leader: Richard Anderson. Time: 7:00am - 10:30am. Habitat: Farm land/hay fields/ wetlands/pond/sunflower field (farm)/ lowland riparian woodland. Distance: By Car 30 miles. Weather: clear, sunny, 50-65° calm. Two things of note: in a mown hay field just to the south of Barr Lake I counted 20 juvenile Swainson's Hawks on the ground -- preening or just resting. Second: in a pond just off Buckley road there were American Coots that had not yet fully fledged, the chicks looked very fuzzy. Finally, in a commercial field of sunflowers to the east of Barr Lake there were 25 Lark Sparrows and many Western Meadow Larks. The ones counted were up on the heads and clearly visible. I did see birds fly into the field and immediately go to ground. Notably, did not see or hear any Red-wing Blackbirds in the wetlands on the periphery this year. Totals: 24 species and 433 individuals.

September 11, Sunday*Castlewood Canyon State Park*

Leader: Kirk Huffstater, Observers: Kyle Huffstater, Daren Soer, Peggy Wait, Mark Amershek, Tom Halverstadt. Distance by car 12 miles, 4 miles on foot. Weather Sunny, a few clouds, 50-80F. Habitat: Ponderosa Pine, Douglas Fir, Gambels Oak, Riparian, willows, grasslands. Our big highlight though was a single, immature Red-headed Woodpecker in the count area, which I think was my first in Douglas County. Species 49, 302 individuals.

September 11, Sunday*Barr Lake State Park*

Leader: Dick Schlotter Observers: David Alcock, Kathy Mihm-Dunning, Nick Moore, Bruce Neuman, Mary O'Connor, Dick Pratt, Jeff Stroup. Distance by car 5 miles, 7.5 miles on foot. Weather Sunny, a few clouds, 55-85F. Totals: 84 species, 3071 individuals. Highlights: amazing number of Snowy Egrets (61), the Chimney Swift (rare at Barr), the Barn Owl.

September 11, Sunday*Rocky Mountain Arsenal NWR*

Leader: Urling Kingery. Observers: Chuck Aid, Jerry Cech, Cheryl Chessick, Hugh Kingery, Alison Kondler, Cynthia Madsen, Sharon Pfeifer, Janet Shin, Karen vonSaltza. Time: 0630-1715 Distance: miles on foot, miles by car. Habitat: Riparian, reservoir, marsh, grassland. Weather: Clear Totals: 90 species, 1748 individuals.

Tuesday birders and the rest of the September birding trips will appear in the January issue.

January 1, 2012 -- Denver Urban Christmas Count

A holiday tradition – everyone welcome: beginners, intermediate, and advanced. The more eyes we have, the more birds we see. And we like to encourage people to get involved. Start the New Year with a half day or whole day effort – a good way to start your New Year's List!

The count covers a circle with a 15-mile diameter that includes the Platte River from North City limits to Mississippi, west to Buckley Field and Rocky Mtn. Arsenal. \$5.00 fee, payable to National Audubon Society, to defray costs of the count.

Pot Luck, 5:00 pm after the count, at Casey Davenport's, 415 South High (5 blocks west of University, about 2 blocks south of Alameda); please call Urling (303-814-2723) so we can count you in on the chili pot, Urling's brownies, Casey's hospitality, and your salad, dessert, veggie, or finger foods.

Count Leader, Hugh Kingery 303-814-2723

<i>Area Location</i>	<i>Leader</i>	<i>Telephone</i>	
South Platte (south) To Confluence Park	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072	Some walking
South Platte (central) Confluence Park to Riverside Cemetery	Casey Davenport	303-744-0613	Some walking
South Platte (north)	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035	Walking
Lower Sand Creek/ Commerce City/Montbello	Mike Serruto	303-377-9870	Some walking
Aurora, Tollgate Ck Upper Sand Creek/Bluff Lake	Randy Lentz	303-680-3381	Walking
Cherry Creek Res.	Bob Brown	303-791-6204 PicaPica@att.net	Some walking
Kent School, S/Hampden	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000	Some walking
SE Denver, N/Hampden	Mary Keithler	303 935 5808 mkeithler@gmail.com 303-798-9924	Walking Harriet Stratton. hstra10@comcast.net
Cherry Creek, dam to University Blvd.	Paul Slingsby	303-422-3728 paslingsby@comcast.net	7-mile walk
City Park/Park Hill	Kevin Corwin	720-482-8454	Car, some walking
Botanic Gardens/ Wash. Park	Marilyn Rhodes	303-674-6580	Car, some walking
Denver Country Club,	Bob Santangelo	303-771-1367	
Rocky Mtn. Arsenal	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723	Some Walking Space available
<i>Fairmont, Lowry Field Denver Zoo</i>	<i>303-979-6211 Brad Parks</i>	<i>Tuesday Birders Closed Closed</i>	

58th Denver Christmas Bird Count- Saturday, December 17, 2011

Count Leader/Compiler: Joey Kellner (303-978-1748), vireo1@comcast.net

Feeder Coordinators: Rick & Connie Steinkamp (303-420-5039)

Compilation (and potluck) meeting: 5:00 pm, South Platte Park classroom, 3000 W. Carson Drive

All DFO members are encouraged to participate in the annual Denver Christmas Bird Count (CBC) sponsored by the Denver Field Ornithologists and the National Audubon Society. To participate, call one of the Area Leaders listed below to assist in a particular area, or call the Count Compiler (contact info above) if you would like to help in an area that still needs additional observers. After a day in the field, all participants are invited to attend the compilation meeting to feast, warm up, chat with other birders, and find out how the count fared. It is a lot of fun. The Compilation meeting will be at the Carson Nature Center (Santa Fe & Mineral Ave, between the Light Rail parking and the Platte River) at 5pm. **Feel free to bring a dish or desert to share!**

Fees: Each observer over the age of 18 must pay a \$5.00 fee to participate in the Denver CBC. Participants should pay the \$5.00 fee to their Area Leader before taking part in the Count. Checks should be made payable to *National Audubon Society*, **not** to DFO.

Pre-counts: Area Leaders are encouraged to conduct pre-counts in their areas, particularly if unfamiliar with the area. Since days and times of pre-counts will vary, contact an Area Leader if you wish to assist on a pre-count in a particular area. There is no fee for participating in a pre-count. The 15-mile diameter "count circle" is subdivided into 24 "count areas" each with a leader. Area locations and names and phone numbers of Area Leaders are listed below. Participants should contact Area Leaders for meeting times and places on Count day, Saturday, December 17.

Area Number and Location	Area Leader	Phone Number
1. Red Rocks Park	Bob Brown	303-791-6204
2. Lower Bear Creek	Mike Henwood	303 716-8551
2A. Bear Creek Lake Park	Kathy Hawkins	303-969-8909
3. Bow Mar/Marston	Kay Niyo	303-679-6646
4A. Lower South Platte - East	Ed Holub	303-979-2194
4B. Lower South Platte - West	Bob Shade	303-975-2476
5. Highline Ditch	Nancy Crews	303-791-8276
6. Plum Creek	Norm Erthal	303-424-6747
7A. Middle South Platte - West	Randy Lentz	303-680-3381
7B. Middle South Platte - East	Urling Kingery	303-814-2723
8. Chatfield State Park	Joey Kellner	303-978-1748
9. Upper South Platte *	Jill Holden	303-972-6410
10. Lower Deer Creek	Lynn Willcockson	303-757-7000
11. Upper Deer Creek	Paul Slingsby	303-422-3728
12. Yegge Peak	Ann Bonnell	303-979-6211
13. Doublehead Mountain	Amy and Tim Davis	303-841-6163
14. North Turkey Creek	Dick Schottler	303-278-8035
15. Indian Hills	Sherman Wing	303-697-8840
16. Upper Bear Creek	Tom Parchman	303-274-7951
17. Ken Caryl Ranch	Tom Bush	303-904-4576
18. Garrison Gate	(Leader needed call the Count Compiler!)	
19. Morrison/Willowbrook	(Leader needed call the Count Compiler!)	
20. Willow Creek	Doris Cruze	303-798-8072
21. Mount Lindo/Willow Springs	Wayne Wathen	720-344-0158

* to participate in this area, you must contact the area leader no later than Tuesday, December 13th.

<i>Fairmont, Lowry Field</i>	<i>303-979-6211</i>	<i>Tuesday Birders</i>	<i>Closed</i>
<i>Denver Zoo</i>		<i>Brad Parks</i>	<i>Closed</i>

“...the next level”

“Two trips every weekend, year round. Anything like that in the rest of the country? Amazing!”

That was the comment of one respondent to the 2010 Denver Field Ornithologists’ member survey. It sums up very well the tenor of responses to the question, “Field trips, what do we do well?”

With that kind of overwhelming appreciation of DFO’s field trip program, you might well ask, “What do you mean, ‘next level?’”

I frankly would have said the same thing when I first took office this spring. The discussions surrounding an event this summer, however, opened a new line of discussion. When the cars of several field trip participants were towed this summer, it initially raised questions of liability and responsibility. Was DFO responsible for paying the fines incurred by the vehicle owners? Does our liability waiver absolve us of financial responsibility? Do we need a list of approved meeting places for field trips?

The immediate question of whether to offer to reimburse the owners of the towed cars for the expenses they incurred was relatively easily resolved, I believe correctly. The board voted to offer reimbursement.

Broader questions remain to be addressed. What do trip leaders need to know to conduct a field trip that safe for participants? What do participants need to know about the risks on our field trips, and what expectations should they have for their behavior and the conduct of leaders and other trip participants? Do we currently provide adequate liability protection for trip leaders, officers, and the club?

When I began thinking about these issues (not my favorite topics for cogitation), I thought about the models of the SCUBA diving industry and the Colorado Mountain Club. I was an instructor in the dive industry for several years, and my good friend Paul Slingsby filled me in on the mountain club’s challenges and approach to solving them. Of course, nobody thinks that birding carries the same levels of risk as SCUBA diving or backpacking and mountain climbing.

What both the mountain club and the diving industry discovered, however, is that liability, safety, and the enjoyment of recreational participants are all related. And the link that ties them together is training and education—training and education of both leaders and recreational participants.

This led me to item A2 of DFO’s 2010 member survey: “What could we do better—in terms of field trips?” Boy! What an eye opener.

There were about as many things we could do better as things we do well. Here are just a few suggestions.

- ◇ “More focus on beginning/intermediate birders.”
- ◇ “...prefer more lead details about targets, educational goals for trip.” Who knew we could have educational goals!
- ◇ “Concentrate on sounds.”

And the real zinger, “Not all ‘leaders’ lead well.” Okay, I know that probably wasn’t intended as a zinger, but it highlights the real issue. If DFO provides no training for leaders beyond one page of guidelines, how do we expect them to lead well if they didn’t get that opportunity to learn somewhere else?

At the September meeting of the board, the board concurred that we should look for volunteers to begin moving our field trips to the next level. This may entail more training for trip leaders, new procedures for scheduling and advertising of trips, more learning opportunities for both beginning and experienced birders, and more attention to safety and security of property.

If you’d like to participate in this process, let me know. The process needs participation from a range of expertise. We need input from experienced trip leaders, members who are thinking about becoming leaders, and those who enjoy participating in trips. You can call or email me at 303-604-0531 or chundertmark8@gmail.com.

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

PRESIDENT

Chuck Hundertmark,
2546 Lake Meadow Dr. Lafayette, CO 80026
chundertmark8@gmail.com 303.604.0531

VICE PRESIDENT

Bob Shade,
13861 W Dakota Ave, Lakewood, CO 80228
wrshade3@gmail.com 303.975.2476

TREASURER

Mary Geder,
13831 W Harvard Dr. Lakewood, CO 80228
mfg5000@live.com 303.986.6127

SECRETARY

Newell Grant,
1325 Cherryville Rd, Greenwood Village, CO
80121 nmgrantsr@aol.com 303.761.9967

DIRECTORS

Chris Blakeslee (2013) chrisabla@aol.com
John Drummond (2012) jxdrummo@aol.com
Tina Jones (2014) tjcalliope@hotmail.com
Kay Niyo (2014) kay@kayniyo.com
Ira Sanders (2014) greatauk@msn.com
Connie Steinkamp (2012) ricconcal@comcast.net
Lynn Willcockson (2014) lynnliz2698@aol.com

Membership Chair

Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place,
Englewood CO 80111-5742 303.771.3431
mcburger3@juno.com

HISTORIAN

Warren Finch, 303.233.3372

FIELD TRIP COORDINATORS

Jan 12 Scheduler needed
Feb 12 Jackie King, 303.287.1644
Mar 12 Chris Owens christieowens2@me.com

Communications

The Lark Bunting has been published monthly since October 1965 for members of the Denver Field Ornithologists (DFO), and copies are routinely sent to The Denver Museum of Nature and Science for data preservation. It provides monthly evening program information, upcoming trip information, trip reports from the previous month, and articles of interest to the Denver birder. Submissions from membership are welcome. They must be emailed to the Editor no later than the 5th of the month for the following month's issue. The Editor reserves the right to accept or refuse any submissions, and to edit any announcement. *The Lark Bunting* does not accept advertising.

www.dfobirders.org is the DFO official website. It showcases the featured speaker at the monthly meetings, posts announcements, and lists for download the upcoming trip schedules and trip reports.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert is sponsored by DFO and RMBO. It is a taped message accessed by calling 303.659.8750 and also appears on CoBirds. The tape informs callers of rare or unusual bird sightings throughout Colorado. It also informs callers of upcoming field trips, meetings, cancellations, and anyone can report sightings at the end of the message.

Cobirds is an internet bird sighting discussion list available through www.cfo.org. Communications about DFO monthly evening programs and upcoming trips are also posted on this List Serve.

Cancellations of any event are rare, but will be announced on all of the above sites except the printed newsletter. Members are encouraged to routinely check for cancellations, especially in severe inclement weather.

Field Trip/Count Reports: Veronica Holt, 33925 County Road 21,
Elizabeth, CO 80107. 303.646.3829, fax 303.646.0532,
veronicaholt@Q.com

Tuesday Birders Contact: Mary Keithler phone is 303-771-1421,
email mkeithler@yahoo.com also Dave Hill is a back-up contact
person. Dave Hill's number is 303-796-0638; email
d_hill@comcast.net.

Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750

Joyce Takamine, Alison Hilf and Dick Schottler.

Lark Bunting Editor

Veronica Holt, veronicaholt@Q.com

Web Site: Richard Holmes Anderson
rholfmesanderson@earthlink.net

The Denver Field Ornithologists' Organization

Purpose: The prime objective of the club is to promote interest in the study and preservation of birds and their habitats. Members are encouraged to learn about birds in the field, noting species and numbers, while familiarizing themselves with their songs and calls, as well as habits and habitats.

Regular Meetings: Monthly DFO Meetings are held at the Museum of Nature and Science in the Ricketson Auditorium. The meetings are held on the 4th Monday of each month, except May, June, July and December. Dates and topics of the meetings are on the Colorado Rare Bird Alert 303.659.8750 and www.dfobirders.org and in this newsletter. Park on the north side of museum and walk around to the west door between 7.00 and 7.30pm. If late, enter through security/volunteer door. Meetings start promptly at 7.30pm and are open to the public without charge.

Field Trips: These are scheduled for almost every Saturday and Sunday, visiting a variety of habitats in the Denver area. Occasionally, special trips are arranged to good birding areas in other areas in Colorado and surrounding states. Usually it is necessary to bring a lunch, and to wear hiking shoes or boots. Carpooling is encouraged (to get the most from bird watching, as well as conserving time and energy. Carpooling charge is .30 cents per mile, divided by the number of birders in the car, including the driver.

Lark Bunting: the DFO monthly newsletter is issued to all members. It lists upcoming field trips, along with detailed reports of previous trips and check lists, along with interesting sightings reported by our members. Depending on the type of membership it is either sent by email, or USPS first class mail.

Rare Bird Alert: With the Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, DFO sponsors this list of sighting of rare or unusual birds, located on the [Colorado Field Ornithologists Web Site](#).

Denver Field Ornithologists 2012 Membership Application

Please state type of membership: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

All memberships expire December 31, but are valid for the next year if paid after October 1st. If more convenient, you can pay for more than one year, just make sure you make a note of that when you submit your payment.

The Denver Field Ornithologists has been recognized by the IRS as a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization. Contributions to the DFO are tax deductible, if adjusted for services and goods received. DFO membership fees with electronic newsletter delivery are fully tax deductible. Contributions to the endowment fund are fully tax deductible. DFO memberships with mailed newsletters (the \$30 Membership), should only deduct \$7 (as the cost of printing, producing and mailing the newsletter is \$23.00 per mailed newsletter). Fees for mailing the field trip reports are not tax-deductible.

- ☐ One year Family Membership (Electronic Lark Bunting) \$20.00
- ☐ One year Family Membership (First Class Mail is \$10 more) \$30.00
- ☐ Student Membership (age 21 or younger) \$5.00

For those who wish to have the field trip reports mailed to them, rather than downloading from the DFO web site, please add an additional \$10 to your regular membership.

- ☐ Contribution to the DFO Endowment Fund \$_____
- ☐ Contribution to 2012 research and education \$_____

DFO grants to individuals or organizations whose mission fosters public education concerning various aspects of the study of birds such as their identification, voice, habits, habitats, as well as their preservation.

Name:

Address

City

State

Zip

Telephone

Electronic (legible) *Lark Bunting* Email address:

Please make checks payable to Denver Field Ornithologists and send to
Mary Cay Burger, 10826 E Maplewood Place, Englewood CO 80111-5742

Denver Field Ornithologists
10826 E Maplewood Place
Englewood, CO 80111-5742

